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RECOLLECTIONS

OF

JOTHAM ANDERSON,

AND

OTHER PIECES IN PROSE AND VERSE.

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THE NORTHERN SUNDAY-SCHOOL ASSOCIATION.
28, ARTHUR STREET.
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RECOLLECTIONS

OF

JOTHAM ANDERSON.

CHAPTER I.

I HAVE lived long enough in the world to exhaust all its pleasures, and to be more than wearied with its cares. Like other old men, I look back upon a life of mingled joy and sorrow, light and darkness, and take an equally melancholy satisfaction in the remembrance of each. There is one light, as I look back, which I see shining everywhere; brighter than the sun of my prosperity, and casting the rainbow of peace on every cloud of my adversity—and that is the light of God's love. I cannot remember the hour when I have seen it hidden. Oh that I had always honoured and loved it as became his child! And, even now, when the infirmities of age are stealing upon me, and, to the outward eye of man, nothing remains for me but toil and sorrow—even now, that love is not withdrawn. It has lighted up, as I may say, a torch of hope, which dissipates all the present clouds of earth, and scatters the thick darkness of the valley of the shadow of death. He who was the guide of my youth, is the strength of my age. He who was my sun at the noon of

life, is my shield at its close. Why should I fear for the future, when the past, though chequered with ill, is yet one continued testimony of divine faithfulness?

Methinks, as I draw near the tomb, I am as much tranquillized and gladdened by my remembrance of the past, as by my hope of the future. And why should I not be? For my faith in the promises is always the clearer and brighter, when I think of my experience of past faithfulness; and my hope is never so steadfast, as when it is supported upon the arm of memory. It is when I reflect on the joy and peace of days gone by, that I feel most able to trust those which are coming. It is then, that

> Religion bears my spirits up,
> And I enjoy a blessed hope.

I cannot remember the time when I had not a sense of religion, and a fear of God; and I have no doubt, that it is owing to my early and habitual impressions, which became interwoven in my soul, as a part of its very fabric, or constitution, that I have enjoyed such quietness and steadfastness throughout a long pilgrimage. Little do parents consider, while they are forming their infants' hearts and characters upon other principles, and teaching them to act by other motives, how difficult they render a subjection to religious motives afterward, and how they subtract from the sum of their religious enjoyment! Were all mothers like mine, how greatly would the obedience of the young Christian's pilgrimage be facilitated, and its peace ensured! I love to dwell on the memory of that honoured woman. My earliest recollection of her is in the act of teaching me to pray,—when she, every evening, took me on her knees, and, clasping

my little hands, made me repeat after her my childish petitions. Methinks I still see the beautiful expression of her maternal eye, and feel the kiss, full of affection and piety, with which she closed the service. At such times, she would explain to me the purposes of prayer, and teach me to love the good Being, who gave me father and mother, and made me happy. It was her practice, also, to seize the moments when my young heart was overflowing with cheerfulness and good will, to remind me of the Father above, and direct my gratitude to him. Thus his image became associated in my thoughts, with all that was gladsome and delightful; with every satisfaction, and every enjoyment. It was mingled with all my remembrances of maternal fondness; and the love of God grew upon the same branch with the love of my parents. I sought to please him, I feared to offend him, I loved to speak of him, and to him, in the innocent openness of my young heart, and to regard him, in all respects, as I did my parents. Thus there was nothing of severity, or gloom, or dread, in my early religious feelings. I knew nothing of the dislike of religion, which I have seen in many others. The judicious piety of my parents made it a delight to me, and not a burden. I saw it mixing with all their thoughts and pursuits, most evidently the ingredient of life which did most to make them happy; never casting a gloom over them, never arraying them in sternness, nor driving away innocent pleasures;—and thus it found its way to my heart, and (blessed be He who has supported me) it has never left my heart, or ceased to be its joy and peace. I have much inconsistency to be ashamed of, and many sins to lament; but, thanks to my pious parents, and the grace of God, I have

never failed to find religion a pleasure, and never withdrawn from my father's God.

Oh that parents would but take a hint of wisdom from this, and treat the young immortals committed to them, as if they were indeed immortal! I have no children. It hath not pleased my Father that I shall leave my name behind me. I cannot, therefore, repay to my own offspring the debt which I owe to my parents; I can only entreat others to do it. And I do most earnestly solicit them to drive austerity from their religious teachings, and to make the idea of God not only one of the earliest, but one of the *happiest* of the infant mind. Let it be presented, not rarely, with ceremony, and on occasions of sadness and alarm—as if a fearful object of dread, which shuns all that is happy; but let it be a familiar thought, beloved, because always connected with happiness, and to be feared only by those who do wrong.

Thus passed the years of my childhood—happier were never known. I was made early familiar with the history and truths of revealed religion, and taught to act every day from a regard to them before any other motive. My parents were very seldom known to employ other motives, with their children, than those of religion. And the consequence was, I was always made to inquire, *Is it right? Will it please God? Would Jesus approve this? Is this doing as I would be done by?*—till such questions formed the standard of my conduct, just as, *What will the people think? Is this genteel? Is this for my interest?* are the inquiries which decide the men of the world. They referred me, on all occasions, to the life and example of the Saviour, and taught me to contemplate, with admiration and delight, the purity,

benevolence, and piety, of that holy pattern. They tried to make it my ambition to imitate him; and never will I forget, how I was sometimes affected by the earnest and feeling manner in which they told me the wonderful story of his love and sufferings, and urged me to begin young, and follow him.

Such, in general, was something of the system of parental instruction to which I owed so much; for it gave me a religious propensity, which, in all the after struggles and sins of life, I never lost. Truly, God's greatest blessings are pious parents.

CHAPTER II.

In the account which I gave, in the former chapter, of my religious education, I rather described the method of my parents, and the design they had in view, than its actual effect on myself;—for I can, by no means, think that I, at any time, became altogether such as they wished to make me. But, assuredly, their labour was not lost; for the seed which they so faithfully planted, and assiduously cultivated, never has died, however feebly it may have flourished. The trunk has grown old, and begins to decay; it will soon fail; but there is hope that it "will sprout again, though the root thereof wax old in the earth, and the stock thereof die in the ground"—that it will spring up with new vigour and eternal beauty in the garden of God.

My childhood passed like that of other children who have tender and watchful parents, and has left as few

distinct traces which are worth recording. The waves of time have flowed over the track which my little boat made, and I can discern its path no longer.

I was in my fourteenth year when I lost my mother. This is one of the events which made a lasting impression. She had been, for a long time, gradually wasting away, and I had seen the anxious countenance and manner with which my father watched her. But a boy, even of thirteen, is not likely to understand or realize such signs, and I remember I had no foreboding of the coming calamity. But at length I observed an altered tone in the morning and evening prayer of my father, which impressed me. I began to suspect the truth. I observed more narrowly. I discovered that the form was wasted, the cheek had grown pale, the eye had sunk, and disease had made a fearful onset, while my childish eyes had been blinded. And I do not wonder that they were blinded; for the calm and cheerful manner of my mother was unaltered, and she spoke and smiled as she always had done. But I now saw the truth, and every hour served to make me see it yet more plainly. My solicitude soon betrayed itself, and then my father summoned resolution to speak upon the subject to his children. The others were younger than myself. They were frolicking in all the unapprehensive lightness of childhood, when he called us around him. There were four of us. The youngest sprang upon his knee, and playfully put her lips to his mouth; while the rest of us, who perceived the emotion upon his face, gazed upon him, and gave him our hands without speaking. As soon as he could command himself—"My children," said he, "God has given you a good mother; but he is

about to take her away from you. You will not see her much longer. She is visited by a disease which is hurrying her to the grave, and we can do nothing but weep, and give her back to God. But we must not weep," said he, bursting into tears, "for she is only going home, going to be happy, which she has not been here. It would be wrong to mourn, for she is only going to sleep a sweet sleep, and we shall all, by and by, sleep too, and then shall all rise together, if we have been good."

Not many days after this, my mother called me to her, as I sat in the chamber, and, kissing my cheek, said: "You are old enough to know what death means, and to learn a lesson from it. I am soon to die. I have known it for a long time, and have perfectly prepared my mind to meet the event. I have no longer reluctance or fear. And now, my dear son, while I speak to you, perhaps for the last time, hear my parting counsel. I have tried to teach you your duty, and to fill your mind with religious principles. Do not swerve from those principles. They are my support now,—they always have been my support. You will need them as much as I do. And if you would cherish them, and have them strong, I charge you never pass a day without prayer. Promise me this, and I shall feel easy." I kissed her hand, and bowed my head; for I could not speak. She put her hand beneath her pillow, and taking thence a locket, containing a braid of her own hair, she gave it to me. "I do not know," said she, "that departed spirits are acquainted with what happens to the friends they have left on earth; but, if they are, I shall never cease to watch your life with maternal solicitude. Think of

this, whenever your eyes meet this memorial of my love. Reflect that, perhaps, I see you, and remember the promise you have made me; or, if not so"—she added, in a voice of inconceivable expressiveness,—"reflect that *God* sees you, and bears witness whether you keep that promise or not. My dear son, farewell! A mother's parting blessing is on your head, and do Thou, O Father, bless him, and make him thine." She kissed me again, and sunk back exhausted.

It seems as if I still heard her voice, and gazed upon her composed, but animated features. And it is one of the joyful anticipations of my approaching removal from earth, that I shall again see that face, and be united to her pure spirit, never to part more. I had no spirit after this, to leave her side, or to engage in any occupation. I was suffered to remain near her; to see the gradual approach of dissolution; and to witness the tranquillity and cheerfulness with which Christian faith can await the appalling summons. She was too weak to say much, but sometimes gave a word of encouragement, admonition, or blessing, to those who were near her; and, after she became unable to speak, she still looked unutterable things, and smiled upon those who did her any little offices of kindness. All was peace within and without; and gently, at last, did she sink asleep in Jesus, without a groan or struggle, and with an expression upon her face, as if she had already caught a glimpse of the glory to come.

There are some who would keep children from the chamber of death, and remove from their minds, as soon as possible, the impressions which sorrow may have made. They little consider the natural buoyancy of the mind,

and the tendency of all feeling to pass away from a young heart. My father was one of those who think that the solemn impressions of such a season should be deepened, and pains taken to make them lasting. He thought that much might be done, to give right views of the value and purposes of existence, and to get ready that frame of mind, which is best fitted to meet and endure the changes of the world. By his conversation, therefore, and instruction, for a long period, he kept fresh the feelings to which this sad event had given birth. He did not converse a great deal in the formal way; it was not his habit, and he rather avoided it, from a persuasion that it was not an effectual mode of addressing young persons. I do not think that he ever made a long harangue to his children, upon any subject. His custom was, to seize moments when their minds were cheerful, and at ease, or when any remarkable event had excited their attention, and, by a few concise, pointed remarks, sometimes by only one single emphatic expression, convey the important lesson. He would then leave it to work upon their minds. And it would often happen, that the words would sink down into their hearts, and never be forgotten. I can recall many examples of forcible sayings thus uttered, which were of great use to me afterwards; but I am certain that the same sentiment, diluted into a formal speech of fifteen or twenty minutes, would have made no impression, and been altogether lost.

Upon the present occasion, he pursued his customary course. He spoke seldom; and because seldom, I dwelt the more upon what he did say. I forgot nothing. And as he directed my reading, and the whole occupation of

my time, I was, for a long season, prevented from returning to the sports of my childhood, or regaining the frolicsome disposition of boyhood.

CHAPTER III.

The education of his children now became the favourite employment of my father. His parish was in a small and retired village, and his parishioners of that humble class, who require nothing more of their minister than an affectionate interest in their welfare, and the plainest instructions in the plainest truths. His duties as a minister, therefore, were not burdensome, and afforded him ample time for the superintendence of his children's education. He was a man of excellent understanding, and admirable love of learning; and well do I remember how delightful he made those years of instruction, by orally communicating the various knowledge with which his mind was full. It was the dear wish of his heart, that I should follow him in the ministerial profession; and, while he strove to give me settled principles of religion, and habitual devotion, he strove zealously, also, to store my mind with every variety of knowledge that could adorn and strengthen it. He had a great abhorrence of an ill-educated ministry, and kept me from college till I was eighteen, with the express design of teaching me many things, which, he thought, I could not learn there. But I doubt not that he was, at the same time, influenced by the wish to gratify himself by so pleasant an occupation of his lonely and widowed time.

As the time approached when I was to go to college, it became necessary to provide some additional means for supporting me there. A country minister may manage with his children at home pretty well, for they may aid him on his little farm. But it is not so easy to support them abroad. It was, consequently, necessary that I should try to earn something for myself. A school was found for me, in a town thirty miles distant, and I left home in November, to spend the winter in this new and anxious employment. My little wardrobe, and a few books, were tied together in a handkerchief, and slung over my shoulder with a stick, and so I trudged along, as many greater men have done.

This winter was an important one to me, as it left its traces upon my whole after-life.

I was a very bashful young man, wholly unaccustomed to the society of men, and quite ignorant of the world. Great, therefore, were the sufferings I endured, both in school and out of school. I was anxious, from principle, to do my duty; but, from timidity and inexperience, I failed to give perfect satisfaction. My own anxiety exaggerated my deficiency to my own view, and often did I wet my pillow with the tears that were wrung from my oppressed heart. Such trials, however, did me good, as they helped me in learning to face the world, and cast me more exclusively on my religious convictions for support and happiness. I have always found, that seasons of removal to strange places, and new duties, have been those in which my faith and sense of duty have been most rapidly improved. When all others were strangers around me, I went the more frequently to God, as a Father and accustomed Friend.

But what I remember particularly in this season, was the trial I underwent in learning the stress that was laid upon the differences among Christians. My father, as I have said before, lived in a retired village, to which the noise of the polemic world did not reach; and whose inhabitants, happy in the simplicity of good and holy lives, felt no interest in the *questions of words*, on which the faith and charity of so many are suspended. They read their Bibles, attended public worship, and lived soberly, righteously, and piously in the world. There was nothing among them of the pride either of orthodoxy or heresy. My father held himself, and was laborious to instil into his people, the most enlarged charity toward all. He was disgusted at the spirit of narrowness and bigotry which he had always seen accompanying a vehement zeal for particular forms of faith. He therefore rarely alluded, either in preaching or in conversation, to the differences among Christians. He seldom even named the names of theological parties. And thus it happened that, strange as it may seem, I grew up almost ignorant that there were parties in religion, entirely unacquainted with their badges of distinction, and with none of that prejudice for and against names, which is often the earliest lesson in religion. It had not escaped me, in the books which fell in my way, that there had been divisions and strifes in the Church, but I saw and heard nothing of them in the world around me, and I felt as though nothing of them existed.

On the evening of my arrival at my new quarters, I was greatly struck with the tone and language of my host and hostess, in speaking of religion. It was different from anything I had ever heard before, and it

puzzled me. Mrs. Hilson was so frequent in her scriptural allusions, and phrases of piety, as to introduce them sometimes very improperly and irreverently; but, in her husband there seemed a constantly half-suppressed sneer, and disposition to thow ridicule on the subject. Both were so different from the serious, manly, intelligible, and reverent manner in which I had always seen the subject treated at home, that I was not a little perplexed to know what to think. One of the School Committee, who was also a deacon of the church, came in during the evening, to see the new master, and give his instructions. As I was too diffident to talk much, and the deacon had but little to say on the business of my profession, the conversation took a turn but little different from a catechetical lecture. After many common-place questions, such as an inquisitive stranger naturally puts first, Deacon Lumbard inquired what were the opinions of my father. I felt ashamed not to be able to give a direct answer, and waited for him to put the question in a different shape. "I mean," said the deacon, "is he Arminian or Calvinist?" This question was hardly more intelligible to me than the former; but, thinking it would never do to say I did not understand him, and, feeling tolerably confident that I should speak the truth, I replied, "I believe he is an Arminian." The Deacon give a *hem!* of surprise, and walked across the room. Mrs. Hilson dropped her knitting, and fixed upon me a look of sad concern; and her husband stopped poking the fire, and turned around with a half-merry stare, as if to know whether he had heard aright. I felt my face colour suddenly all over, and I thought I must have made some dreadful blunder. No one spoke for some time.

At length, the deacon said—"An Arminian!—We don't think much of Arminians here." The tone of his voice went to my heart, and the sound of it rung in my ears for weeks. I never had before witnessed this abhorrence of a name; and such a crowd of feelings rose within me, that I could do nothing but remain silent and confused. Mr. Hilson relieved me, by saying, "But, deacon, there may be some good men amongst the Arminians." "That's more than you know, or I either," said the deacon. "But you think it's possible they may be saved, don't you?" rejoined my host. "It is not promised," replied the deacon; "it is not in the covenant; and, as they do not hold the true faith, they are certainly in a dangerous way. I should not expect I could be saved myself, if I was one of them." "But all things are possible with God," said Mrs. Hilson, mildly. "True," said the deacon; "and if any of his elect be in this error, he will snatch them from it before they die."

The course which conversation had thus taken, led to the statement of all the tenets of Calvinism, to which I listened with amazement, sometimes mingled with horror; for many things were so new and strange, so apparently contradictory, so repugnant to my most cherished feelings of religion, that I seemed to be in some region of romance, rather than among Christians. Of one thing I felt certain, that, if I had wrongfully called my father an Arminian, at least, he was not a Calvinist. But what is there so much an object of horror in an Arminian? Why so difficult for him to be saved? I was lost in the perplexity of my own thoughts.

Before the deacon went, he proposed to join the family in prayer. He first read the eighth chapter of Romans,

and then poured out a long and earnest prayer, of great vehemence and minuteness, in which I was made an object of special supplication. The loudness and fervour of this act of worship, so different from the calm and subdued tone of my father, thrilled and agitated me with a new feeling; and when the deacon, as he went out, put his hand solemnly on my head, and, with an affectionate emphasis, wished me God's blessing and success in my new office, I was overpowered, and burst into tears. I cannot pretend to explain my feelings. They were a chaos of confusion. I was young, everything was novel, my situation was such as to render me uncommonly susceptible, and religion was presented to me in a form altogether new, and with something inexplicably solemn in the manner of its professors. Those who have ever been placed in a situation in any measure similar, will understand something of the feelings which kept me many hours awake that night; and will easily perceive, that I could come to no conclusion, except that of writing to my father, as soon as possible, to inquire what was an Arminian, and what he himself was. Being quieted by this determination, and comforted by my prayers, I at last fell asleep.

CHAPTER IV.

Under some circumstances, the feelings I have named would soon have passed away, and my mind have returned to its usual state. But my situation was such as to keep me agitated and harassed in spirit for a long sea-

son. I, however, always have seen cause to rejoice in that trial of my faith, and to render thanks to my heavenly Father, who thus established, strengthened, and settled me in the true and living way.

It was expected of the master that he should pray in the school, morning and evening. I knew it to be the custom, and had been greatly disturbed in the anticipation of being called to its performance; for, as I have said, my natural diffidence was extreme. As the time drew near, the dread of it weighed upon my mind with an oppression which I cannot describe; and when the moment came, upon the first morning, my resolution failed me, and I commenced the ordinary business without a prayer. This, however, was no relief, for I felt that I had done wrong. My conscience severely reproached me, and, for several days, I was made wretched by the struggle to overcome what I thought a sinful timidity and shrinking from religious duty, which could not fail to bring upon me the heavy displeasure of God. At length, my religious sense of duty got the victory, and, on Saturday morning, I, for the first time in my life, addressed my Creator in the presence of fellow-beings.

I was so engrossed by my own feelings in this affair, that it had not occurred to me, that I might draw upon myself the displeasure of the village. It had not even suggested itself to me, that what was done in school was known abroad. I returned to my lodgings at noon, happy in the triumph I had gained over myself. I was hardly seated, when a gentleman entered, who was introduced to me as Mr. Reynolds, the minister of the parish. He saluted me coldly, and, after a momentary pause, began the conversation by saying, with some sternness,

"Young man, I understand that you do not pray in your school. The duty never was neglected before in this town; and if you are not sensible enough of its importance to attend to it, you are unfit for the place. How can we expect a blessing on our children, if God be not remembered in their instructions; and how can he be fit to teach, who will not seek wisdom from above?"

This unexpected address confounded me; and, after all that I had suffered in my mind, was more than I could sustain. I burst into tears, and, as well as I was able, stated the exact truth. Mr. Reynolds was not a man to appreciate the diffidence which had caused my error, and he rebuked me for yielding to it. He expressed his satisfaction, however, that I had conquered it. "I have heard of your father," said he, "though I do not know him personally. I am not solicitous for the acquaintance of those who are not perfectly sound in their views; and I am not surprised, that the religious faith in which he has educated you, is too weak to overcome your fear of the world. Nothing but the genuine Gospel can subdue that false pride of the natural heart. But I trust you will learn better. God has sent you here at a propitious season for the interests of your soul, and I do not doubt you will find it blessed to you. There is a powerful work of grace going on amongst us. The Holy Spirit is evidently in the midst, and there is a great rattling among the dry bones. Our meetings are frequent, full, and solemn. You must attend, of course, as many of them as you can, and you will see such operations of divine power, as are wonderful to behold."

Much more, and more earnestly, he talked on this topic, and, at length, pressed me with close and trying

questions, respecting my own religious opinions and experience; and drew from me a minute account of negligences and failures, which he represented to me as glaring and dangerous defects. My conscience was a tender one, and easily joined in accusations against myself. I had a horror of displaying myself to greater advantage than the truth, which led me to conceal almost every thing in my religious character which he would have approved. I could not bring myself to speak of those private exercises of my spirit, which I accounted sacred to the inspection of Heaven. Mr. Reynolds argued warmly, and warned me earnestly. His tone of expostulation was powerful in itself, as well as new to me. I felt it to my heart's core. My timid spirit shrunk and trembled. He left me in a state of amazement and anxiety, which robbed me of the perfect possession of my faculties for the remainder of the day.

In the afternoon, when, of course, I was unengaged, several friends of my host called in, who were interested in the religious state of the village, and made it the subject of their conversation. They talked of the meetings which had been held, of the cases of those who had been affected, and described at length the situation and exercises of some of the converts. A wholly novel scene was thus unveiled to me. Religion and religious feelings were presented in a new light; and the eagerness with which the matter was discussed, the breathless curiosity and sympathy expressed in the eye, the flushed cheek, and the impatient attitudes of speakers and listeners, were calculated to make a deep impression upon a novice like myself. The comparison of this exhibition with what I had always seen, and

reverenced, and loved as true religion, perplexed and distressed me. I could gain no peace, after many hours of anxious thinking, but by remembering that longer observation would teach me what was right, and that it was my duty to wait patiently. I gave myself, therefore, to the reading of the Scriptures, and, at length, laid myself down calmly to wait the opening of the Sabbath day.

On this occasion, and on thousands since, I have derived peace from prayer, when every thing else conspired to vex and distress me--a proof, of itself, that devotion of spirit is the essence of true religion; and that he who has this, cannot be lost to God, nor be a stranger to his favour, however he may err in controverted truths.

CHAPTER V.

It is impossible for me to follow minutely my recollections of this memorable winter. They would fill a large volume, instead of the few sheets which my trembling hand is able to write. It must suffice to say, that the new scenes into which I was thrown, continued to be occasions of severest perplexity and anxiety for many weeks. I had been bred religiously; I had been scrupulously conscientious. I had thought myself a lover of God and man, and had rejoiced in the hope of heaven. But my religion had been noiseless and secret. I had seldom conversed respecting it, except at particular moments, with my father. I had never been excited by

crowds assembled, nor had I ever been conscious of any extraordinary change in my dispositions, or feelings, or life. I had gone on quietly, from childhood to youth, conscientiously, but calmly, and with no display of zeal. I had seen in my father precisely the same operation of religion which I had witnessed in myself, except that it was far more perfect. I had thought this the true Christian character; and, although often I had sighed over my imperfections, yet I never had suspected that I was wrong in principle.

But if what I now saw and heard were the genuine exhibition of religion, then I had been entirely and wofully deceived. If I must believe what was perpetually urged in my ears, then I was only a hypocrite, without Christ, and without hope. Nothing can exceed the distress with which this thought was attended. Many nights did I pass sleepless and weeping with uncontrollable anguish of spirit. I became almost unfit for any duty. My thoughts preyed on my health, till my robust body wasted under the torture of the mind, and my cheek was pale and sunken.

For why, thought I, should I not believe all that I see and hear? I cannot deny the existence of the sincerest, heartiest religion here. Earth cannot contain a purer and meeker spirit than my hostess possesses; and where is there more real and actuating piety that in Deacon Lumbard, though he be a little narrow? and where a nobler benevolence, and more solemn concern for Christianity, than in Mr. Reynolds, though he be a little rough? and then, how general and deep is the religious impression that prevails—how serious, how anxious, how devout is the whole village—how indefatigable in

teaching and learning—what a sense of the evil of sin, and dread of the divine displeasure—and not my own father could discover more anxiety for my good than my friends do here.

Yet, while I thus looked with reverence upon the zeal and piety I witnessed, I could not listen to the representations of gospel doctrine, which were perpetually made, without a certain horror. This, I was told, was an infallible sign of an unrenewed heart; and this served to aggravate my distress. I never had studied controversy, nor heard it preached; but my father had always implied something very different from what I now heard, and I could not reconcile the representations I now met, with the impressions I had received from the Bible. My blood chilled when I heard the arbitrary decree of election pronounced, and, connected with it, the joy of the righteous in the sufferings of the wicked. I was most distressingly bewildered in the contradictions about depravity and accountability, irresistible grace, involuntary faith, and changes rung, without end, on justification, adoption, sanctification, and imputation. It was a wilderness to me. I turned on every side, and could find no relief. If I had only seen these things in books, I should have passed them by as wild speculations. But I found them filling the minds and thoughts of men, whose religious zeal was more imposing to my mind than any thing I had ever met with; men whom I honoured and loved, who treated me with assiduous kindness, and who assured me, with the earnestness of the most solemn asseveration, that they built all their religion, and all their hope, on these doctrines, and that they could conceive of no salvation on any other ground. Thus

beset, what could I do? Who would wonder if I had yielded?

I at length told those who had interested themselves most warmly in my belief, that there was but one course for me to take, namely, to examine the Scriptures anew, with fresh care, and abide by the result. To this proposal they warmly assented, not doubting, as they said, that they Holy Ghost would teach me; and they left me, with solemn prayer, to pursue this design.

I look back to the execution of this purpose with the highest gratitude and satisfaction. Every leisure minute found me at my Bible, and the morning often broke while I was yet studying. Earnest were my prayers for light, and sincere my wish to be instructed; and He who heareth prayer heard me, enlightened me, and gave me a happy confidence in the result of my labour. My opinions became fixed and grounded on the sure testimony of God; and I no longer felt embarrassment at the very opposite representations of gospel truth, which were prevailing around me. They could still sometimes blind my eyes for a moment with the dust of metaphysical subtlety; but the breath of the divine word soon blew it away, and I saw clearly.

I now became tranquil and happy. My cheerfulness of spirit returned, and, with it, health. My anxieties ended in a serene and settled peace, no more to be disturbed by the tumult round about me. I came out of the trial, in every respect, the better for having passed through it. My opinions were more clearly defined, and more solidly grounded. My devout feelings were become deeper, and more ardent. While, at the same time, my intimacy with the sentiments and characters

of those who differed from me, gave me a juster view of them, and a more real regard for them, than under any other circumstances I could have attained. This has been of incalculable benefit to me through life. I have been preserved by it from a great deal of false and censorious judging, and enabled to discriminate between the merits and weakness of my more orthodox brethren, so as to maintain for them a sincere respect and unchanging charity. And I have always found that these are least bigoted, who are best acquainted with those whom they oppose. Nothing destroys uncharitableness and censoriousness so certainly, as an intimancy with the habitual feelings and characters of men of other sects. Bigotry is the offspring of ignorance.

Such was the end, and such, in a few words, have been the consequences of the scenes which I have described. But my trials were not yet over. My own mind was satisfied, but others were dissatisfied; and I was doomed to endure coldness, reproach, suspicion, and alienation, from many, who had been forward to instruct me, and who had professed the warmest and most disinterested frendship. I was made the subject of village gossip and scandal; a thousand false and calumnious reports were spread abroad; and I became little better than a heathen and a publican to the zealots, who, a few weeks before, seemed ready to sacrifice even their lives for me. But of these things I must speak in another chapter.

CHAPTER VI.

The trials to which I alluded in my last chapter, as coming upon me in consequence of my decision in regard to religion, were of several sorts. I can name them but in few words. I had supposed that all who professed a friendship for me, and had so zealously interested themselves in my behalf, would rejoice with me in the relief of mind I had gained, even though they might have wished that my conclusion had been nearer to their own. But in this I was disappointed. From the moment it became known in what manner my concern of mind had terminated, and that I was not to be *brought out* as a convert, after their fashion, there was a manifest change in the manner of many towards me. Instead of cordiality, I found coldness; instead of a welcome, I met a repulse. And I soon found that all their zeal for my soul's welfare was little more, at bottom, than a desire to have the eclat of the schoolmaster's conversion; that there was a grievous disappointment, not at the danger in which my soul was placed, but in this frustration of a party object. I had too much proof of this, to fear that I charge them wrongfully.

But this was not the case with all. Some were truly and benevolently afflicted for my own sake. Amongst these was my excellent hostess, Mrs. Hilson. I had all along held the most free communication with her; she knew the whole state of my mind, and acted toward me the part of a mother. She was too gentle and meek

to be bigoted; but as all her own rich treasures of religious comfort and hope were built on the doctrines she had been taught, and they were associated with every pious and benevolent sentiment of her soul, she very naturally could conceive of no real religious happiness from any different source. When she found that I could not draw from this, she was troubled, for she thought there was none other. She did not question my sincerity, but lamented my blindness in not seizing what, from *her own experience*, she knew to be the only secret of happiness. Wiser persons than she have made the same mistake, of trying all others by their own experience; while, in fact, men's experiences differ as much as their faces.

I shall never forget the kind and tender interest she expressed toward me, to the last day of my residence in the village. She was, in all my solicitudes, a faithful friend. To her I could unbosom myself without restraint, and find relief from her sympathy. Our hearts could feel and pray together, however we might vary in our creeds. And, to the last of her life, while her friends and my friends were zealously accusing each other of corrupting the whole gospel, she ceased not to feel, that there might be Christians who were not Calvinists: and I, for her sake, have always been able to see the spirit of the gospel reigning, even among those whose speculations were most hostile to its truths. Indeed, who, that has ever formed an acquaintance beyond the narrow pale of his own sect, does not feel the wicked meanness of that bigotry which confines piety and salvation to those who agree with himself.

"I still hope," said Mrs. Hilson, the evening before I

returned to my father's house; "I still hope and trust that you will see reason to think differently."

"I pray that I may," said I, "if I am wrong; I have no wish but to learn and follow the truth; and I say, sincerely, that I think I could, in a moment, embrace any opinion that could be proved to be of divine authority. You have yourself seen how anxious I have felt, and how diligently I have sought."

"Certainly, certainly," she replied; 'you have done your duty well, and I think God will not leave so sincere a soul in darkness. It is this that makes me sure you will, by and by, be brought right. We must wait his good time."

"But why," said Mr. Hilson, who was a blunt, good-natured man, "why, Betsy, should you wish Master Anderson to change? I am sure there is not a cleverer, honester man, nor better master to be found. And as for his religion, he's as serious and prayerful, and studies his Bible as hard, as any of them, though, to be sure, he is not for making such a noise about it. Now, to my mind, this is the right way; and I am sure, that if any body could make me Christian, it would just be this Mr. Anderson. And his quiet sort of religion, now, would do more to work upon the minds of one-half the people here, than all the stir that's been made here this winter. Why there's a great many been driven away from all kinds of religion, by the confusion we've had about it. I believe I should have been myself, if it had not been for the master. And there's many a one that will never get over this disgust, but is made, I warrant it, profane for life."

"You astonish me," said I, for this was entirely new

to me; "it is not conceivable that men should be so unreasonable. What, fly off to irreligion, because their neighbours are so engaged in religion? They must be very ill-disposed persons."

"No," replied he: "not so ill-disposed neither; some very conscientious men have been affected in this way; and if I was to speak my mind, I should say that this stir has cooled as many friends to religion, as it has made."

"Husband, husband," cried Mrs. Hilson, "how can you say so? I am truly ashamed of you."

"Look here, my dear," said he, "who is likely to know most of it; you, who see only one side, or I, who see both sides? Now I know all that's going on, and all that's said everywhere in the village; while you only know what passes at meeting, and among go-to-meeting folks; and I can tell you, beyond all doubt, that the devil has gained some disciples as well as Christ. I'll tell you a few things. I've heard more swearing, and seen more drinking and ill temper, amongst the men, because of this thing, than I ever knew in the village before in my life; and from some very reputable folks too. There's the Joneses and the Malcolms have not been calm this two months; and there's no doubt their wives would do more for religion by staying at home, and making their houses happy with it, than by running away, and causing their husbands and children to hate it. Then, besides those that are hurt in this way, you know there are some of the converts that are said to be none the better since their zeal has cooled. You know how —— and —— and —— turned out; and there are more too."

"You ought not to triumph over this," said I.

"And I do not," said he; "but there are them that do; and it has afforded more joy and jests to infidels and blasphemers, than I can tell you of. Now does not this do harm to real religion? And would not it all have been prevented, by permitting matters to go on quietly and soberly, as in times past? For, take five years together, there would have been as many Christians made in the usual way, as by all this extraordinary movement; while, at the same time, none of this extraordinary evil would have been done. This is not all. It is incredible what sin has been committed in the way of slander and lying, and that by very pious people, too. I'll tell you what reports have been spread about you, Master Anderson, just by the way of specimen. First, it got about that you were under deep concern of mind, and had written home to your father, who told you not to be troubled, for the people were mad, and religion would spoil you for a schoolmaster. That you became afterward more earnest; and when you could get no comfort from your father's principles, he sent you to Mr. Reynolds, and you found peace. That then your father, too, became anxious, and came to see Mr. Reynolds, and confessed to him that he had never felt religion, and was more than half an infidel; and that he was converted, and went home, and got up a revival in his own parish. All this, and much more, was made up out of the whole cloth, and circulated, as so much gospel, by those who knew it was all false. And when it was discovered that your mind was settled another way, then it was said, and is believed to this day, that you have got another Bible, different from ours; and that a good part of the time you

pretended to be studying the Scriptures, you were playing cards in your room, with R—— and E——. For a whole day, it was believed, that you had told the children that it was all nonsense to pray in the school, and you should do it no longer. I could tell you a great deal more of the same sort; and so you must not wonder that some folks think there is no religion in what bears so much bad fruit."

Mrs. Hilson appeared as much disconcerted at this disclosure, as I was amazed. She said, however, that it was fair to look on both sides, and count the wheat in the field, as well as the tares. "True," said her husband; "but will everybody do that? Most persons will not do it; and, consequently, most persons will be injured."

"But you and I must do it," said I; "religion is a solemn reality, whatever imperfections there may be in its friends; and surely you will not, on account of those imperfections, refuse to strive for your own salvation."

Mr. Hilson has since told me that this sentiment struck him more forcibly than any preaching he had ever heard. I am happy to add, that he became, in after life, one of the most enlightened and sincere Christians I have ever known.

I parted from my friends the next morning, amidst the most affectionate wishes. Deacon Lumbard came to give me his parting blessing, and to say that he did not doubt he should yet see me all that he could wish, for he loved me too well to think otherwise. As I passed the minister's door, I stopped to bid him farewell. He shook me by the hand, saying, he loved me none the less for my honesty, and doubted not God had a blessing for me. The kindness of these two good men was a cordial to my

spirits. I left them, better and happier for having known them; rejoicing that there was a better world, where imperfection would be done away, and where the holy light of unveiled truth would dissipate the little cloud that now hovered between us.

CHAPTER VII.

My college life, on which I now entered, was like that of many other young men. I applied myself zealously to the duties required of me, and became ambitious of distinction. My thirst for knowledge increased, and, with it, my desire of eminence. I allowed myself little time for sleep, or recreation. I denied myself even food, that I might sit at my books, without the necessity of exercise to help digestion. I know not how it was; but, gradually and insidiously, literary distinction became my ruling passion. My Bible was consulted less frequently; my seasons of devotion were hurried over, and even the worship of the Sabbath came, at last, to be attended by me with little interest or feeling.

I was sometimes uneasy at perceiving the change which had taken place in my affections, and felt alarmed for the result. But I satisfied myself with saying, that as soon as I should be relieved from my present hurry, or have finished the study I had now on hand, I should have leisure to resume my religious vigilance. But this leisure did not come, and I suffered myself still to go on. I quieted the remonstrances of my mind with the persuasion, that a man cannot feel equally engaged at all

times on any subject; and that, at any rate, I was preparing myself for the duties of life, and why was not this as acceptable service as the performance of my religious duties? Then, if conscience answered, that the preparation for future duty is no excuse for neglecting present duty, I stifled the suggestion, by burying my thoughts in study.

I tremble to this day to think of the hazard I was running, and in how dreadful a ruin it might have ended, if it had not pleased God to send me a rebuke. I had already entered my senior year, and, with a heart full of ambition, was pressing on to realize, in the honours before me, the darling object of my hope. I had overplied my powers, and they gave way. My body refused to sustain the labours of my mind, and after four weeks' severe illness, it was thought I must sink to the tomb.

Of the early part of my sickness I have no recollection, except of a confused feeling of disappointment and vexation at being thus stopped and frustrated in my career. It seems to me like some long dream, in which I was struggling with envious and malicious foes, who were conspiring against my improvement and reputation. I seemed, at length, to awake from the dream, and found myself a feeble and helpless man, stretched upon my bed, and attended by friends, whose anxious countenances revealed to me their fears.

"What is that bell for?" was the first question I asked.

"It is tolling for the exhibition," said my friend.

"The exhibition," said I, starting with surprise; "how long have I been sick?"

"Nearly four weeks."

"Exhibition!" I repeated—"and I am not ready; I

cannot be there;—when I had so depended on it—so longed for it—and here am I shut out from——. When shall I be able to go out, Thompson?"

"You must lie still," said Thompson, "you are too weak to talk; keep yourself quiet." And he withdrew from the bed.

Thompson's voice and manner struck me, and I at once suspected the truth. Never shall I forget the feeling that came over me, as the conviction flashed across my mind, that I was dangerously ill. A cold thrill ran through my frame, and the sweat issued upon my forehead. "And is this," thought I, "the end of my hopes? Is it all to end in an early grave, and a forgotten memory. Spare me, O God, that I may recover strength before I go hence to be seen no more."

As soon as my first surprise was over, I set myself to collect my thoughts, as well as I was able, and to prepare my mind for the event. And now the wide extent of my folly became visible at once. I saw the full measure of my negligence, and the whole unworthiness of my delusion. I felt the emptiness of that ambition, for which I had sacrificed my religious affections, and would have given the world to return to that spiritual frame which I had possessed two years before. Then I thought of my privileges, my opportunities, the discipline I had passed through, the early instructions of my mother, the faithful counsels of my father;—and, as I thought of him, I involuntarily spoke out,—"Has my father been sent for, Thompson?"

Thompson looked at me with surprise, and, after a few moments' hesitation, answered, "Yes, and he is expected to arrive to-morrow."

To-morrow came, and at the expected hour, my father entered the chamber. He had evidently come from a hurried journey, and wore a countenance of anxiety and grief. I held out my hand, and he took it without speaking. We were both thinking of a separation, and, for some moments, could not trust ourselves with our voices. At length I broke silence, for I had been fortifying myself for the interview, and had my powers under my control.

"My father," said I, "I rejoice to see you. I know why you are come, and shall feel the easier for your presence. You led me in the beginning of life; and, if my life must close, it is a consolation to lean on you at last."

"The will of God be done," said he; "I had hoped it would be otherwise ordered, but the will of God be done. I am glad to find you look upon it so calmly. Your religion supports you, as I thought it would."

"I trust in God's mercy," said I; "I need it. Oh, my father, you do not know how foolish I have been, and how nearly I have lost myself in the love of worldly honours." And I told him the state of my mind for some time previous. "But," I continued, "I have humbled myself before God, and cast myself on his compassion. I have thrown away my false ambition, and renewed my vows and prayers, and I hope I have found pardon and peace. I have given up everything to my Maker, and trust I may depart in hope. Father, give me your blessing."

He knelt down by my bed, and prayed. My soul was thrilled by the sound of that voice, so familiar and so loved, and a thousand tender recollections crowded upon

my mind. I was refreshed and strengthened, as I listened, and lifted nearer to heaven.

A long silence continued after he had ended, while we both pursued our own reflections. At length I untied from my neck the locket, containing my mother's hair, and handed it to my father. "I wish to leave this," said I, "to my sister Jane, with the same injunction with which my dear mother gave it to me. Tell her that it has been a talisman to me, in many a difficulty and temptation; and that if I had never suffered myself to be unmindful of it, I should have been spared the only pain I feel at this time. Bid her, therefore, wear it in memory of her deceased brother, and mother, and as a pledge that she will never pass a day without prayer; remembering, that if *we* cannot see how she fulfils this pledge, GOD DOES; and the day is coming when we shall know, also."

I was too feeble to pursue the conversation, and soon became faint. I thought myself dying. After I revived, I could catch, from the occasional whispers in the room, that it was thought I could not live through another night. I had nothing further which I wished to say, and I lay quietly, in the perfect possession of my powers, waiting the signal to depart. O, the indescribable sublimity of that hour! Words cannot picture the solemnity of feeling which pervaded my mind, as my thoughts flew, in the pressure and excitement of the season, with the rapidity of lightning, to the past and to the future,—to my own life, to the truths of Christianity, to the perfections of God, to the promises of Christ, to the prospects of heaven,—and the whole was framed, with an intense energy, of which I can now hardly con-

ceive, into a perpetual mental prayer. Thus I was occupied, until sleep overcame me, and I was lost in forgetfulness.

It was ordained that we should be deceived. He who had brought me low, intended but to chasten and heal me; and, when I had learned all that a deathbed could teach, he again breathed into my frame, and bade me live to praise him.

CHAPTER VIII.

Seek first the kingdom of God, and the righteousness thereof, and all these things shall be added unto you.

These words were perpetually present to my mind, during my recovery from the illness which I have mentioned, and gave rise to much salutary reflection, which helped to establish my resolution for the future. I felt how easily the one thing needful slips away from those who cease to seek it, and how liable even a religious man is to lose the substance of happiness, in pursuing the shadow. I persuaded myself, that if the prime object of DUTY were secured, a man could never feel anything actually wanting to his well-being; for it is very evident, that the pursuit of the highest duty, and most permanent good, is consistent with the pursuit and enjoyment of every other object really desirable.

I experienced the truth of this at once, in returning to the studies of my class. My great struggle had been to subdue my inordinate ambition. It had interfered with my religion, and must be sacrificed. It was a dear sa-

crifice, but I took my resolution, and it was performed. The consequence, I supposed, would be, that I should fall from my standing as a scholar, and graduate with less reputation than I had coveted. This was a mortifying anticipation; but better risk my scholarship than my religion, thought I, and I summoned firmness to brave the result.

This result was quite other than I expected. In proportion as I became indifferent to my reputation for mere reputation's sake, I found myself able to study and recite with greater ease and self-possession. Formerly, my extreme anxiety to do well, and my morbid dread of doing ill, had occasioned an irritability and hurry of spirits, which often threw me off my self-command, and produced the very evils I sought to avoid. But now, having little desire, except to do my duty, I was cool, collected, and preserved the full command of my powers. So that, to my surprise, I acquitted myself better than formerly, and rose in my class, rather than fell. A certain portion of every day was sacredly devoted to religious exercises and studies; and the time thus subtracted from classical pursuits, was more than compensated by the steadiness of mind and equanimity of feeling which it produced.

Here, then, was the first reward of my renewed fidelity. I was permitted to experience then, as I have always done since, that our religion has the promise of the life which now is, as well as of that which is to come. How many deceive themselves, and are miserable from not knowing this! They sell themselves to the world, and take the world's wages; which, at the moment of death, they are compelled to resign, and then have nothing which they can carry hence. Whereas, in the ser-

vice of God, they might have no less enjoyed what earth affords, besides all the present and future satisfactions of the soul, which are far richer and purer. There is no state of the mind so happy in itself, and, at the same time, so fitted for success in the duties of the world, and for contentment amidst its difficulties, as the tranquil and composed frame of habitual devotion.

From this time my resolution was taken to devote myself to the ministry. There had always been a prevailing desire in my mind to engage in this office; but sometimes my distrust of myself, and sometimes my occupation in other studies, had prevented me from making an absolute decision. But my late experience had so wrought upon me, that I could think of no other occupation consistent with duty. I suspected it to be my father's wish, though he had never intimated it to me. When I named to him my determination, he expressed his hearty approbation. "This," said he, "is what I have looked forward to with earnest hope. It has been, from your childhood, my constant wish and prayer, that I might see you joined with me in the great work of the gospel. I rejoice that the day has come; and that, without one doubt or fear, I may encourage you to go on, and bid you God speed. Your faith and perseverance have been tested. You know what trial is, and will be able, from the wisdom of personal experience, to help others who are tried. Enter the work, and prosper. You will still meet with trials severe and heavy; but He, in whose strength you have hitherto been safe, will always provide a way of escape, if you but seek it."

I would that I had room to record all the instruction which he imparted on this and on other occasions, with

the affectionate piety of a Christian minister and the overflowing tenderness of a parent. I would that I had been more sensible, at the time, of their value, and how much it was enhanced by the fact, that I was not long to enjoy his intercourse. But, for two precious years, I did enjoy it. I was employed as a teacher of the school in my own native village, and lived and studied in the house of my birth. I was my parent's companion at home, and in his visits abroad. I read with him the most important books, in my preparatory studies, and we conversed familiarly on all topics of theology and morals. Happy and profitable were those days, when I was permitted to cheer the declining path of him who gave me being, at the same time that I was drawing from him treasures of ministerial experience, to guide me after he should be departed!

CHAPTER IX.

The entrance on the ministry is a period of anxiety and excitement of spirit, to which no one can look back, even after the lapse of years, without a throb of emotion. To a conscientious man, who feels the weight and responsibility of the office, the exercises of that season are deep and trying. About to appear as the messenger of God's word to the souls of men—to be the herald of eternal truths—to be a fellow-labourer with Christ, in the work of human salvation, and the bearer of the prayers and intercessions of men to the mercy-seat of heaven; his spirit is oppressed, and trembling, and ready to faint—

for how can he discharge so various and awful vocations? But, then, again, when he considers the incalculable importance of the work, to which none other on earth is to be equalled; when he thinks of the honour of bearing a part in it, the shame of drawing back, and the wide field for doing good—his spirits become animated, and he girds himself for the toil, with alacrity and zeal. It seems as it were but yesterday, that I was passing through this alternation of hopes and fears, of exhilaration and despondency. I still see the chamber which I paced for hours, anxious and sleepless, night after night; and where I gradually gained resolution to begin the sacred work. Forty-seven years are past and gone, but it is fresh as the memory of to-day. I have, in those years, passed through heavy vicissitudes of earthly lot, and waves of trouble have rolled over my heart, enough to obliterate from it every trace of that early anxiety. But it abides vividly in my memory, and the old man of seventy-two feels over again, as he writes, all the solicitude of the youth of twenty-five.

It was on the third of September, that, after a ride of twenty miles, I reached the village where my father had recommended me to make the first trial of my gifts. I bore a letter from him, in my pocket, to Mr. Carverdale, the infirm minister of the place, offering my service to aid him on the Sabbath. The sun was just throwing its last beams upon the spire of the meeting-house, as I came upon the little common where it stood, and cast my eyes around, in search of the minister's house. This is easily known in a country village, and I immediately rode up to a neat cottage, with a small yard before it, which stood just back of the meeting-house, and was almost

lost amid the trees, which threw their aged branches around and over it. The old gentleman was sitting in his arm-chair at the open door, looking out upon the setting sun. I alighted, and approached him with the letter in my hand. While he was engaged in reading it, I had leisure to collect myself, and study the appearance of a man, whom I had not seen since I was a child, and to whom I was an entire stranger. He was a tall, thin man, whose few remaining hairs were white with the hoary frost of age, and his countenance marked with years and suffering. But there was a majesty and serenity in it, which struck me with awe, and would have become an apostle. I think St. John might have looked so, when he was carried into the church, as he approached his hundredth year, to repeat his customary benediction, "*Little children, love one another.*"

"You are heartily welcome," said he, when he had finished the perusal of the letter, "and I thank your father for his kindness in sending you. But he was always kind; and I can present no better prayer for his son, than that he may be like him. I was doubting if I should be able to speak to my poor people to morrow. I am unusually feeble; I have sensibly decayed this week. I might not be able to address them. But now they will be instructed from younger lips. It will be enough for me to break to them the holy bread. I am glad to have all my strength for that. Who knows but it may be the last time?"

I felt called upon to say something; and, with the real diffidence which I felt, I said, that I was very sorry he would not have a better substitute to-morrow.

"Young man," said he, "let me warn you against a

trick of disparaging yourself in this way. It does not become the simplicity and sincerity of the ministerial character. You are in your Master's service, and should use such language to none but him. It may be modesty now, but it will become vanity; vanity in its most disgusting dress, the guise of humility. Think of nothing, but to do your duty. Do that as well as you are able, and be not anxious to say or to hear in what manner it is done."

This advice did me great good. It taught me to guard against that sensitiveness to the opinion of others, which is so apt to disorder the motives of action; and has saved me, perhaps, from that painful and ridiculous habit, which I have witnessed in some, of always speaking slightingly of what they do, for the sake of hearing it praised. It becomes the dignity of a preacher of the gospel not to speak of his labours at all, except to some confidential friend, and for the sake of improvement.

"I do not mean to pain you," continued he, "for I have no reason to doubt your sincerity; but I use an old man's privilege of plain speaking, to put you on your guard. My light is almost out, and I must do good while I can. I am as low in my horizon as yonder sun now is. But while I am here, I would give light to the last. It has always been my prayer, that I might sink to my bed as that luminary does now, useful to the latest moment, and unshadowed by a cloud. God save me from the empty, shattered remnant of existence, which would be a weariness to myself, and a burden to others. Yet I fear that the prayer will not be granted, and it will try my patience and faith to have it denied. But His will be done! You," continued he, "are like the sun in

his rising, rejoicing in the prospect before you, of a day of light and glory, of a work of beneficence and love, in which you shall cause righteousness and piety to bud, and become fruitful. It is an excellent and most blessed work! Enter it, and prosper! May God be your light, and honour you abundantly, in the kingdom of his dear Son."

He rose from his seat, and, leaning upon me, entered the room where the family were sitting. "We always pray at sunsetting," said he. The ancient family Bible was brought forward, from which a chapter was read, upon which he made a few remarks, and then uttered a fervent prayer. It seemed to come from a patriarch's lips, and to be instinct with the devotion of that future world, on whose borders he stood. We retired early to rest, and arose with the sun on the morning of the Sabbath. The trembling voice of the aged servant of Christ mingled with the early stirrings of the morning breeze, and welcomed, in the animated accents of praise, the blessed recollections of holy time. His whole air was serene, tranquil, and thoughtful. He seated himself again, by the door of his cottage, and remained there musing and conversing, at intervals, until we were summoned to the public service.

My attention had been so much diverted from myself, and my mind so interested in the conversation and character of this good old man, that I passed through the trial of my opening ministry with far happier feelings than I had anticipated. When the exercise was concluded, he arose in his place, and reminded the church, that the emblems of their Master's love awaited them. "Would to God," said he, in his feeble, tremulous voice,

while he turned his eyes around his congregation—"would to God, that ye were all disposed, and ready to partake of them. My infirmities warn me, that this is the last time they will be dispensed by my hand. Ah, why are ye not all waiting to receive them? For more than half a century have I broken this bread here. How often, in that long period, have I entreated and urged you all to come and partake. I have warned, and admonished, and pleaded with you, even unto tears; and yet how many of you suffer me to leave you, and carry up with me, when I go hence, the sad story, that you have no mark of gratitude for a Saviour's love—no obedience for a Saviour's dying command. You are willing to oppress my last hours with the bitter thought, that, for many of you, I have laboured in vain; and though I have loved you here, I may hardly hope to join you again in the eternal communion with the saints. Dear friends, let it not be thus. I stand here to bid you farewell. Who of you is willing that it should be eternal? Who of you would part never to meet again? I hope and pray for better things. I *will* hope, that, although we have not sat down together here, we shall be permitted to do it hereafter. And let me ask of you, for this once at least, this last opportunity, not to leave me: but remain, one and all, to witness, though you do not participate. Who can tell how it may please God to manifest himself to you? Who can tell, while we all join our prayers and devotions for the last time, what influence may descend to bless us? Who can tell, but our remaining together now, may be the omen that we shall be prepared to meet in a higher state?"

The effect of this unexpected address, delivered with

quivering lips, and the piercing accents of deep and earnest feeling, was irresistible. Not one of the congregation left his place. The minister descended to the table, and an affecting service ensued, whose deep and touching solemnity I have never seen surpassed. Many there were, who, like myself, received impressions that never passed away. And many, I doubt not, will be found at the supper of the Lamb in heaven, who, but for that hour's holy and overwhelming feeling, had never sat at his table on earth.

CHAPTER X.

It will not be thought surprising, that, by the scene which I described in the last chapter, Mr. Carverdale was entirely exhausted. While the excitement of the occasion lasted, he looked and spoke with almost the animation of youth. But, when it was over, he sank down, weak, trembling, and nearly fainting. The old cords had been stretched more than they could bear, and lost their tone for ever. When the people had dispersed, he attempted to rise from his seat, and follow them, but was unable. Several of his friends advanced to his assistance. "The light is almost burned down," said he, in a voice scarcely audible; "might it only go out here at the altar, how privileged I should be!" Some one expressed a hope, that it might yet be continued for a season, to the benefit of his church. He shook his head. "No," said he; "and why should I wish it? It is only a flickering, fitful flame. It may

brighten a moment to-day, but will be dim again to-morrow, and cheer no one. No; my poor flock need a vigorous flame—a burning and shining light. I am wasted. And if it please my God soon to remove me to a place among the stars of the firmament, why should I lament, or why should you? For I have that hope; I thank God, I have that hope."

This he said with frequent interruptions, showing that his spirit was stirring, though his body was weak. He seemed unable to say more, and was carried in the arms of his friends to his house, and placed in bed. He fell into a sleep, which the physician declared to be the prelude of death, and which, he said, it would be useless and cruel to disturb, by attempting to prolong life. "The machine," said he, "is worn out, and will gradually come to a stop."

He remained in this state, apparently unconscious of what was passing around him, until I was summoned to the afternoon service. In the same state I found him, on my return. In the meantime, the report had obtained currency among his parishioners, that their minister was dying. With affectionate concern, they crowded around his dwelling, and manifested the strongest sense of his worth, and liveliest gratitude for his past services. Never have I known eulogy more eloquent than that which I read in their tearful eyes, and whispering voices, as they stood silently waiting, or anxiously conversing before the door, and beneath the windows. Their sound was distinctly heard in the chamber, as I stood with his friends beside his bed. It at length seemed to arouse him, and he opened his eyes. "What is this?" said he.

"The people have come from meeting," it was replied, "and are anxious to know how you do."

"They are kind souls," replied the old minister; and, turning his eyes around, as if looking for some one, he called me by name. I bent over him, and he took my hand. "Go to them, my young friend; tell them I thank them for all their fidelity and kindness. Carry them my last farewell. Bid them remember my last instructions; and God bless them."

I went to the door, and, beckoning to the several groups, collected them together, aud spoke to them as I was desired. When I returned to the chamber, the good old man was taking leave of his friends, and to each of them giving his blessing. He called for me. He was exhausted, and could no more speak audibly. His lips moved, and I thought I would have given worlds to know what they would utter. After a few moments' silence, he exerted himself again, and we understood him to ask that there might be prayers. I kneeled down, with his hand still in mine, and commended his spirit, in such words as I was able, to the great Father of mercy. It was a solemn moment. There was a silence and awe like that of the tomb, interrupted only by the laborious breathing of the dying man, and the low voice of youthful supplication. When I had ended, he pressed my hand, but said nothing. We feared that he would not speak again; but it was permitted us to hear his last words distinctly. For, when something had been said respecting the good man's support in death, he spoke out audibly, "THE TESTIMONY OF CONSCIENCE, AND THE MERCY OF GOD IN CHRIST." This was his last effort. We stood silently,

watching for his departing breath, when, as the sun was going down, its beams forced their way through an opening, amid the branches of the thick trees which grew before the windows, and fell full upon his face. A smile came over his countenance; and, before it had entirely passed away, he ceased to breathe. I remembered his conversation on the preceding evening, and rejoiced at his quiet departure.

When it was known that their pastor was actually dead, all those of his parishioners who had not retired to their homes, pressed into the house, to take a last look of one whom they had loved and reverenced so much. Not a word was spoken by any one in the chamber of death. The silent gaze, the tearful eye, and the cautious tread, evinced the impression which was upon every heart, and the feeling of awe with which the sleep of the patriarch was contemplated.

My own feelings, during these scenes, it is impossible for me to describe. But I have always felt, that I had reason to thank God for appointing me to open my ministry in so singular and affecting a manner. The serenity of aged piety, and the peace of a Christian's deathbed, gave me impressions which helped still more to prepare me for my work. I am certain, that, for years, this day was present almost constantly to my mind, and endowed me with courage, fortitude, and spirituality, which I might not otherwise have attained.

CHAPTER XI.

It was in less than a year after this, that I found myself occupying the place of this venerable old man, of whose last hours I had been, so unexpectedly, the attendant. It may readily be conceived, that, with no ordinary feelings, I took possession of the pulpit where I had heard the expiring sounds of his ministry, and seated myself in the room where he had studied, and at the table upon which he had leaned and written for half a century. To my ardent view, everything about me was sacred. I fancied there was inspiration in the very walls, and that I inhaled a good spirit from the very air in which the holy man had breathed. And while I studied in his books, and dipped my pen in his inkstand; while I read from his Bible, in the family circle which he had left, and in which I was a boarder, and stood up to offer their daily devotions on the spot which his prayers had consecrated, I am sure that I felt a glow in my heart, which more important circumstances have oftentimes been incapable of producing; but which was, nevertheless, highly favourable toward forming a frame of thought and feeling suited to my vocation.

Indeed, it rarely happens to a young man to begin the arduous work of the ministry under happier auspices. The circumstances of my lot and education had been so ordered, as constantly to excite and keep fresh the religious sentiment. It had been stirred and animated by the frequent remarkable scenes through which I had passed. The manner of my introduction to my parish

was calculated to revive and strengthen, in no common degree, all the feelings I had ever experienced, and all the resolutions I had ever made, in relation to the great duties of personal and pastoral religion. I cannot recall to mind this period, without an expression of devout gratitude to Him who appointed my lot, and in whose strength I have toiled on to this day. I have seen some of my brethren disheartened, and sinking beneath their load, the victims of a sickly sensibility; some miserable in their work, because their hearts were not engaged in it; and some losing their reputation and usefulness, through indolence. But for myself, being always possessed of bodily health, and heartily attached to my duties, I have never found them burdensome and fatiguing. And I may say, that I never have found them so to any, except those who have wanted the spirit of their office. How shall I cease, then, to be thankful for the early instruction of those kind parents, and the severe infliction of that youthful discipline, which formed in me inclinations and desires, which nothing could have gratified but the labours of the sacred office. They have been my pleasure; and nothing else would have afforded me pleasure.

I soon found, however, that there is much to damp the ardour of enthusiastic expectation with which a young man, ignorant of the world, enters upon his career. I can hardly help sighing now, when I call to mind the many fair visions which were cruelly dissipated by my further acquaintance with mankind; and the severe and mortifying rebukes by which my open-hearted inexperience learned prudence and caution. It was a great shock to me to discover, so soon as I did, the necessity

of distrusting appearances. This was one of the first lessons which I learned, by intercourse with my parish —perhaps one of the most important I ever learned. Certainly none has influenced me more in my whole life since; none, perhaps, has made me, at times, so unhappy.

Like other young persons, I trusted to the good show which any one made, and confided, implicity, in all that any one might say of himself. I delighted in the warm expression of religious feeling, and was ready to give up my heart to it, wherever I might find it. I could not believe that zealous profession could be made by any one who was insincere at heart. It was a great blow to me to be undeceived.

There were few men in the town more assiduous and kind in their attention to me, after my ordination, than Josiah Dunbar. He recommended himself, by his punctual attendance at meeting, and by his fondness to call upon me, and converse on religious subjects. He entered fully into the history of his experience, and drew from me the relation of my own. His appearance was austere, his manners simple and solemn, his voice a little whining, and his eyes were cast in humility upon the ground. His age was about fifty; and I thought that no young man was ever so blest in the confidence and advice of a devout parishioner.

I found, however, that he was not popular in the village; and that the worldly, sober part of the inhabitants, especially, spoke of him rather slightingly. This grieved me; but I accounted for it by a remark which he himself, once, or rather often, made, with a deep sigh, and solemn shake of the head:—"Ah, there is nothing

that the world can find lovely in the children of God. They are always despised and trodden upon." My experience has since taught me, that this is far from being true. But, at that time, I took it for an established fact; and, when I found any commendatory remark, which I made respecting Mr. Dunbar, received in silence, or with a sneer, I imputed it to the natural dislike of men to superior goodness. Ere long, however, I observed some things in his conversation, which I myself disliked. He was too fond, I thought, of complaining of the want of religion in others, and of the great coolness of church members. There was, doubtless, room for complaint in many instances, but he was too frequent and petulant, and spoke too sarcastically of good moral lives. Now, I could see no harm in a good moral life, and once told him, "that I did not think it so much against a man, that he was a moral man; that I rather thought it the part of charity to believe, that what we cannot see is as good as what we do see; and that what we do see, is, really, though not visible, grounded on right principle." He was dissatisfied with this remark, and ever after affected to be concerned, lest I was resting too much on works. He thought that I preached "works" too much; and he harassed me often with minor questions about justification, and faith, and righteousness. All this, however, was done in the kindest way imaginable, and with so earnest appearance of desiring my good, and that of the church, that, although I thought he urged matters a little too much, yet my respect for him, and love to him, rather increased than diminished. No man had made me so much his confidant, and, consequently, no man was so much mine.

What he proved to be, finally, I will tell in the next chapter.

CHAPTER XII.

It was the universal custom of the people, in the strait days of my youth, to keep the annual day of fasting literally, so far as to abstain from a dinner. Nothing was eaten between breakfast and sun-down, except, perchance, a light luncheon, in the interval between the morning and evening services. It was not uncommon, however, to compensate for this extraordinary abstinence, by a supper as extraordinary; and the meat and pudding which had been refused at noon, were devoured with a keener appetite in the evening. It was thought that the whole duty was performed, if the body were but mortified during day-light.

There were some in my parish, who had departed from this custom. Mr. Dunbar came to me the week preceding the fast, in the spring following my ordination, lamenting the decay of ancient manners, and begging me to urge, in my next sermon, the importance of a literal fast. He said much of the aid which devout men had derived from it in all ages, the profoundness it gave to their contemplation, and how it aided their prayers and spiritual-mindedness; he insisted that self-mortification was necessary to growth in grace; and that we were in danger, from employing it too little, of becoming entirely devoted to our animal and sensual nature.

I replied, that I had no doubt of all this, and that

such had been, and would be, the efficacy of fasting, when it was voluntary. He that will, from religious motives, and the desire of holy meditation, deny his appetite, and spend his dining hour in devotion, will, unquestionably, find it profitable. But if the fast be kept by compulsion, or from no better motive at bottom, than that it is the custom, then it will probably be unprofitable, and will hinder, instead of promoting, the devotion of the day. Besides, I added, temperance is a better aid to the powers of the mind than abstinence; and, moreover, they who abstain at noon, are very likely to revel at night; and, in that case, whatever good may have been wrought, is more than lost. Mr. Dunbar said, he was aware that the day oftentimes ended in festivity and indulgence; but, for his part, he abhorred it; in his own family, the supper was always frugal and religious; and he wished that I would attack this crying sin, as well as the other.

"Or at least," said he, coming at last, to the point at which he had all along been aiming, "if you do not think right to preach, I wish you would speak a word of quiet advice to Mr. Ellerton, for his example goes a great way; and it is a sinful thing that he should cook and eat on fast-day, just as on any other day. He makes no difference in the world. And what will become of religion and the church, if such men are to lead astray the simple people by their example? A good moral man, to be sure, and the world speaks well of him. But no man can say that he has ever experienced religion; and I am sure, for one, that he is an Arian at heart, if not a Deist. Indeed, I think he ought to be brought before the church, and not tolerated in

quiet any longer. There is no knowing what mischief his example may do; and our fidelity to the Head of the church requires that we cut him off."

Mr. Dunbar had more than once before spoken to the prejudice of Mr. Ellerton, but never so explicitly as now. I did not, altogether, like the tone in which he continued to enlarge, and at last replied, that even if I thought lukewarmness and suspected error, proper subjects of church interference, yet I was too much a stranger in the place, to promote any such objects now. And as for the matter of fasting, I could not interfere at all; for I intended myself to take my usual meals.

He left me, evidently disappointed. On the day of the fast, there was observed in him a studied appearance of rigour and melancholy, and every external manifestation of suffering for sin, and absorption in divine meditation. He was of a "sad countenance, and disfigured his face." In the evening, according, as it was ascertained, to his usual custom, a sumptuous supper was provided. He ate and drank to excess, and died the next day in consequence of the surfeit.

The shock my mind received, on learning these circumstances, may be easily conceived; much more so, when the whole history and character of the man were revealed. He was discovered to have been altogether unprincipled in his transactions with men—artful, and fraudulent, and sensual; so that, in a word, for I cannot enlarge on so unpleasant a theme, his name became a by-word in the village, and never was spoken, but with an accent of indignation. Yet so great had been the cunning of the man, that he had both escaped detection, and had passed, for the most part, thought not altogether,

without suspicion. There was but one person who thoroughly knew him, and that was Mr. Ellerton. When I learned this, I perceived at once the cause of his ill-will to that gentleman.

Mr. Ellerton was one of the principal citizens of the place, and, in most respects, the very reverse of Mr. Dunbar. He was, like all other respectable men of that day, a professor of religion. But no man could be less anxious about its *forms*. He appeared with a dress, and countenance, and speech, like those of other gentlemen. He seldom made religion the subject of conversation, and was generally supposed not to be fond of reading the Scriptures, and not to have devotions in his family. He was suspected, also, of not being quite sound in the faith. He was esteemed precisely what is called a good moral man. Very few would venture to call him a *religious* man, though he was punctual at church, and friendly to the ministry. But, then, he was proverbial for his truth, integrity, and kindness, and "every virtue under heaven." No man could be more universally respected and beloved.

I did not, at this time, know so much of him, for my ear had been poisoned by Dunbar. I had been led to look upon him coolly, and to avoid, rather than seek, his company. I had, consequently, in the seven months of my ministry, become hardly in any degree acquainted with him. The circumstances of Mr. Dunbar's death led me to suspect the correctness of my impressions, and made me solicitous of greater intimacy with Mr. Ellerton.

I soon discovered and admired the purity and firmness of his moral principle. But I wished to go further, and

ascertain the state of his religious sentiments and affections. When we had become well acquainted, and were together by ourselves, I found him ready and pleased to converse frankly. I immediately found that he was, indeed, an Arian; and as I had always been taught, without knowing why, to look with horror on Arianism, as little better than Infidelity, and to take it for granted that there could be no religion at heart, without the worship of the Trinity, I thought that I saw, at once, how it happened that he wore no show of religion, for he certainly could possess none; that is, none of its fervour life, and spirituality; nothing of it, but its decent, every-day morality.

But a more intimate acquaintance taught me, that he was no stranger to the holiest and tenderest feelings of piety; that he had experienced, deeply, the inward power of the gospel, and acknowledged it as a religion of the affections. So that, in a word, it has seldom fallen to my lot to know a soul of more elevated, expanded, and heavenly-minded religion, than dwelt within the frame of that unobtrusive man; giving direction and beauty to his whole life, but itself unseen and unheard, in any separate or ostentatious display.

The observation of these two characters furnished me with much matter for reflection. It made me, ever after, cautious and distrustful of appearances, to a degree that was even painful. I learned to be jealous of lip religion, and cold towards those who were forward in profession. Nay, I was beset with an indefinable reserve, which sealed my lips, and checked the current of my feelings, whenever the subject of religion was touched by strangers, destroying much of the comfort and satisfaction I had

hitherto enjoyed in religious conversation. How much have I suffered from this cause! while nothing that I have gained has been able to compensate for the quietness and peace of the unsuspecting temper which I have lost. I think, however, that I have gained something, by teaching myself and others to lay the stress upon the solid excellence of a good life. The longer I have lived, the more have I been persuaded, that this is the great end of human endeavour, and the great touchstone by which we are to judge one another. The heart *we* cannot see; it must be left to the judgment of God. But wherever the life is uniformly and consistently good, I have learned to consider it as the part of charity to suppose that the heart, also, is right. I have been unable to join in the outcry against moral lives, as if they were, of course, signs of a worldly heart. I have thought it mischievous: I may say, I have *found* it mischievous. Religion is helped, by maintaining the dignity and importance of good works; yea, even though they stand by themselves. But it is injured, if they be sneered at and defamed, because, however you may explain and qualify, many will understand you to say, that if there be faith and zeal, a good life is, at best, of only secondary importance. They will, therefore, make only secondary attempts to attain it. How many souls have been ruined in hypocrisy and spiritual pride through this mistake!

CHAPTER XIII.

Mr. Ellerton, of whom I spoke in the last chapter, was another added to the number of the "excellent of the earth," whom it had been my privilege to know. Some of the peculiarities of his religious faith, and those in pretty important particulars, were widely different, I had reason to think, from those of any other good man I had met with. He did not believe in a tri-personal Deity; and this was a sort of unbelief which I, like ten thousand others, looked upon with a vague sort of horror, I knew not whence nor why. For a long time, therefore, I could not believe that he was really so good a Christian as he seemed to be: and when it was impossible to doubt this, my next conclusion very naturally was, that Trinitarianism, though the truth, yet could not be essential to the Christian, for here was a Christian without it. This discovery did a great deal to set me a thinking, and to enlarge my views. But its best and happiest consequence was, to confirm me in my persuasion, that the great practical and vital principles of our religion are common to all believers. From this persuasion I have never varied. Experience has every year confirmed it; and it is still one of the most comforting convictions of my heart.

I look forward, with the most delightful anticipations, to the day when I shall join in one communion the souls of those many good men whom I have honoured and loved here, but from whose fellowship I have been shut out by the miserable bars which prejudice and pride have put up, amid the churches on earth.

But another important consequence was, that, not finding Arianism the monstrous thing that I had imagined it, but, on the contrary, consistent with every Christian grace, I was led to look upon it with complacency. I felt ashamed of the prejudice I had suffered myself to entertain. I felt mortified and humbled, that I should have permitted myself to gather, from the wholesale censures of books, and the sweeping sneers of conversation, an inimical impression against the holders of an opinion of which I knew nothing. This was the precise fact: I did know nothing, absolutely nothing, about them. I had examined other opinions, but not this. To this I had never turned my attention; had never asked a question about it; but had gone on in the way my father taught me, taking it for granted that I was right; and not so much as troubled with a suggestion, that it was possible I might be wrong. I recollect perfectly well the first time the thought occurred to me. It was when I became well acquainted with Mr. Ellerton's character, and had been striving in vain to reconcile it with his anti-christian creed. The question seemed to be asked me: How do you know it *is* anti-christian? I felt at once that I did not know, for I never had inquired. I cannot describe the sensation which passed over me, as this thought flashed through my mind. A cold thrill went through my frame—a tumult of thoughts crowded and agitated my mind. I soon felt that it was my duty to inquire, and know that whereof I would affirm; and, in great anxiety of mind, and earnest supplication for heavenly guidance, I at once entered upon the investigation.

The first discovery I made was one which has been

made by multitudes besides, but which filled me with inexpressible surprise. It was, that I was not, and never had been, a Trinitarian. When I came to see the definitions and explanations of the doctrine, and compared them with the state of my own mind, I found that I had used its language, but had never adopted its meaning. I had fallen into its use, just as I had fallen into the common language of men about the rising and setting of the sun—not because I believed what the words literally imply, but because it was the phraseology in common use where I lived. Trinitarian doxologies I had employed, because I had always heard them from childhood; but I found that I had never affixed to them Trinitarian notions. I found that I never had worshipped any being but the Father of Jesus Christ, and that all my religious feelings were grounded on the supposition of his single divinity.

So, then, I thought to myself, I have been guilty of contemning and denouncing a sentiment, which, all the time, I ignorantly held; and of thoughtlessly using language which implied a faith different from my actual opinion. This discovery humbled me to the dust. I could scarcely bear the burden of shame and reproach which my conscience heaped upon me. I have since found that this thoughtlessness is by no means uncommon. Inexcusable as it is, yet many have I known in precisely the same situation with myself. Indeed, I have reason to believe, that the large majority of those educated in the orthodox faith, are no more truly Trinitarian than I was, though they imagine themselves to be so; and I have accordingly found, that when they allow themselves to look fairly into the matter, they dis-

cover themselves to have been Unitarians all their lives, without knowing it.

Had I been acquainted with this fact at the time of which I speak, it would have saved me much unhappiness. As it was, I had a long and painful labour to go through, in ascertaining whether my language or opinions were the true revelation on this subject. The one or the other must necessarily be rejected as wrong. For two years, I pursued the inquiry with all the anxiety and impartiality of a conscientious mind. It would take too much room to detail the progress of my experience at this time. Suffice it to say, that I obtained complete satisfaction at last, and have been ever since happy in the simplicity and consistency of my Unitarian belief. I have known many pass through the same process, with an equally happy result; and many, I may add, with a result still more happy, because their minds were relieved by it from the distressing burden of other ungenerous doctrines, which had preyed upon their spirits, and disquieted their lives, but from whose bondage I had been redeemed some time earlier. I cannot but remark here, how much is effected by the light of a good conversation. I was set on thinking, and won to the knowledge of the truth, by observing one man's Christian deportment. It would be well if Christians were generally aware, that they cannot produce any so powerful argument in their favour as a holy life. Thousands will understand it, and be convinced by it, whom no reasoning, though it were demonstrative, would at all affect. "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven."

CHAPTER XIV.

It was in the summer of ————, that Mr. Garstone took up his residence in our village. It occasioned no little surprise and speculation in that retired place, that a stranger, of education and property, should select it for his abode. He built a commodious, but small house, upon a little hillock, by the side of a beautiful pond, which lay about a mile from the meeting-house. I never had seen him; but, as soon as he had taken possession of his place, I felt it my duty to call, and bid him welcome.

The room into which I entered, impressed me at once with respect for the owner of the mansion; and as I cast my eyes around on its neat and elegant comforts, I thought that I saw indications of taste and refinement, beyond any thing to which I had been accustomed. A piano-forte, a rarer luxury then than now, stood open on one side, and, opposite to it, a book-case, well and handsomely filled. I could give but a hasty look, when Mr. Garstone entered. He was, apparently, about fifty years of age, thin and pale, with a settled melancholy upon his countenance, which sometimes approximated to sternness; and a manner reserved and cold. His appearance rather repressed the warmth with which I was disposed to greet him; and, after several ineffectual attempts to throw off the restraint which his manner imposed, I left him, disappointed and sad.

I looked, in vain, for his entrance to the meeting-house on Sunday, though his two daughters were there. They

were dressed in deep mourning; and this, I thought, might account for their father's manners, though he had made no allusion to any affliction. I soon visited him again, and gradually we became a little acquainted. His wife, I found, had died about ten months previous; he had lost his only son just before, and had now bid farewell to the world, intending to spend the remainder of his life with his daughters in retirement. He attended to their education, he studied and read, and amused himself with the cultivation of his lands. He had an extensive acquaintance with books and subjects, and oftentimes would delight me with his animated and intelligent conversation. I derived much instruction from his society, and he seemed to take pleasure in mine. But all attempts to introduce religious conversation he uniformly set aside; and never attended public worship. This made me uneasy; and I longed to know why it was, that a man who was evidently unhappy, was yet willing to be a voluntary stranger to the consolations of religion.

It was not so with his daughters. They were little instructed in religion, but they took an interest in it. Indeed, as far as they had been taught, they felt its great truths deeply, and exercised a profound piety. They were glad to converse, when it happened—which was very seldom—that their father was not present; and I often thought that their countenances expressed sorrow that the subject must be dropped on his entrance. I one day expressed my surprise to them, that their father should habitually absent himself from public worship. They replied, that it had been so ever since their memory; and that they believed he did it from principle.

"Has he no sense of its importance and value," said I; "does he feel nothing—think nothing of the great truths of religion?"

"Alas," replied the elder, whose name was Charlotte, "I fear he thinks but too much, and feels too much. I have reason to suppose, although he never speaks of it, that it is this which lies at the bottom of his unhappiness; and that, if this burden could be removed, he would be a cheerful and happy man."

I looked at her for explanation. "Unreflecting men," said she, "may be happy without religious faith; for their habitual thoughtlessness excludes the subject from their minds. But a man who is in the habit of reflection, and who cannot keep from his mind the thoughts of the Author of his being, and the great concerns of futurity, must be often wretched without a settled faith."

"It is true, then," said I, "what I have suspected, that your father is not a believer in the Christian religion?"

"It is," she replied; "and to you who know him, this will account for all his appearance and habits. For how can such a man, who longs and pants for the refuge of its truths, be happy without them? He may have everything else; but the want of these will leave an aching void, which nothing else can fill. Oh, what a blessed day it would be to us all, which should make him a believer! He has everything else to render himself and us happy; but for want of this, there is a bitter taste to every enjoyment, and discontent in every scene."

"Is he not aware of the cause of his dissatisfaction?" I asked.

"He is," replied Charlotte, "and yet he is not. That

is to say, he acknowledges the power of the Christian faith in others, and I believe is truly happy that we possess it. But he will not allow that it would do any thing for himself. He insists, that in his literary and philosophical pursuits, he has all the satisfaction that the human mind can attain, and that nothing could add to his happiness. But it is very seldom he speaks on the subject. Indeed, he is so strongly prejudiced, that we avoid any allusion to it altogether. For I think he is the more violently positive, from the very feeling he has that there is an essential thing wanting. He tries, in this way, to stifle his feelings, and to convince himself that he wants nothing."

"I have seen something like this," said I, "in other cases; but I should not suspect it in your father. How is it that he is thus prejudiced?"

"It is partly," she answered, "his misfortune, and partly his fault. His misfortune, because, in early life, he was thrown into the midst of fanaticism and bigotry, which disgusted him, and rendered the whole system incredible to him: his fault, because he suffered prejudice to sway him, and did not deliberately institute an inquiry, which should separate the false from the true, and show him that the system itself may be true and excellent, notwithstanding the follies of its friends."

"Can you state to me at length," said I, "the circumstances under which these indelible impressions were made?"

Before Charlotte could more than commence a reply to this question, Mr. Garstone came in, and the conversation took a different turn. I returned home, deeply interested in what I had heard, and anxious to hear more.

CHAPTER XV.

What I had now heard, interested me too much to suffer me to rest, until I had learned more. The history of Mr. Garstone I found to be this: He was the son of parents whose religion partook of the character of austerity and superstition. He was educated in the most rigid restraint, and imbued diligently with the dogmas of the Assembly's Catechism. When he had grown to years of understanding, being of a strong mind, and peculiarly susceptible feelings, his reflections on the subject of religion became earnest in the extreme, and occupied him day and night. A fear of God, rather dreadful than pleasant, as he expressed it, had always oppressed him, and it now made him miserable. The doctrines which he had learned in childhood, he now began to understand, and reason upon, and apply to himself. He saw, that if they were true, he was condemned, by his birth, to an eternal curse, which only the re-creating grace of God could remove. And this grace was appointed to visit only a chosen few. Was *he* one of those chosen? Should he ever taste this grace? Or was he abandoned by the discriminating spirit of God to his horrible destiny?

Beneath the agony of heart which this personal application of his creed produced, he struggled long and wretchedly. His misery, he told me, was indescribable. His life, for months, was a burden of terror and torture. Everything lost its relish, in the desperate attempt to gain salvation and hope, from what appeared to him

the sentence of despair—a sentence which he was sometimes tempted to pronounce inconsistent with every attribute of justice and goodness. But this temptation he was taught to reject as blasphemous, and a foul instigation of the devil. He strove to smother every feeling of this nature; and in spite of the clear demonstration, which, the more he reflected, the more strongly was forced upon him, he compelled himself to believe that all this might be so, and God still be just. In this tumult of contradictions—in this struggle of his mind to be reconciled to what he felt to be dreadful, and tried in vain to perceive to be right, two years of misery passed away, and health and cheerfulness passed away with them. Reading, reflection, tears, prayers, were all in vain. The counsel of friends was also vain; for his state of mind was a cause of congratulation to them, being, as they supposed, the struggle of the natural man in the throes of the new birth, from which he would come forth regenerate and rejoicing. They rather increased than allayed his perplexity. They rebuked his attempts to reason on the subject, and told him it was vain to hope for satisfaction, except only in that prostrate faith, which God would give, if he pleased, and when he pleased. They bade him, therefore, wait and not be guilty of the blasphemy of trying God's ways by the rules of human reason.

He did wait, but to no purpose. He humbled himself, and strove to quell what was called his pride, and to believe the consistency of what appeared to him contradictory, and made it the burden of his prayer, that he might only find peace, and he would willingly sacrifice every other thing. It was all in vain. No

peace came. But, not to prolong the story, the powers of his mind at last triumphed. He found it impossible, after every effort, to attribute to the government of God what he had been taught to attribute to it. He gradually came to the determination, that such a system could not be true; and he rejected it, as contradicting almost every high and holy truth which nature and common sense teach of the great Creator.

I could not help being deeply interested in this history. Unhappy man, thought I, thus driven away from the light and comforts of God's Word! How different might have been the result, if he had been blest with early opportunities like mine. He would have found help in his difficulties, as I did; he would have learned, that the Gospel of God's love is not implicated with any of those dogmas, "*at which reason stands aghast, and Faith herself is half confounded;*" and he might have received it in its native beauty and uncorrupted lustre,

"Majestic in its own simplicity,"

the ornament, support, guide, and joy of his soul, conducting him tranquilly through life, to an everlasting hope. But of all this he had been deprived. He had come to reject the Gospel, from never knowing truly its real character. He had thrown away its peace, from having a counterfeit offered in its stead.

But though he had rid himself of this cause of trouble, he was far from tranquillity. His religious propensities were strong, and his education had been such as to associate ideas of the highest importance with the subject. His reverence for God was deep and habitual, his belief in a future state fixed, and his conviction that God had

revealed himself to the world, was too deep-rooted to be easily removed. There was a great deal, too, sublime, and beautiful, and delightful, in the history, character, and teaching of Jesus, which he could not reconcile with his imposture, any more than he could reconcile the doctrines he had been taught with his truth. Here, then, was another distressing embarrassment. At length he strove to escape from it, by avoiding the subject altogether. He put away his Bible, he neglected public worship, he involved himself in other studies and active pursuits, and tried to forget all he had ever known or thought about revealed religion.

But he could not succeed. It came to his thoughts in spite of him, and never suffered him to be at rest. His mind often misgave him; he became anxious, melancholy, fitful, unsettled; an unbeliever, yet anxious to believe; striving to think himself wiser and happier than others, yet secretly hoping he should one day be like them; with a fixed abhorrence of what had been urged on him as the peculiar doctrines of the Gospel, yet conscious that human wisdom can have no light, and human weakness no hope, except from the declared mercy of Heaven.

Such was Mr. Garstone when I knew him. And I may truly say, that I never have seen the man more deserving of compassion; nor can I imagine a more sad picture of the deplorable effects of unbelief. I bent my knee in devout gratitude for the felicity I enjoyed in the glorious faith and hope of Christ; and breathed an earnest prayer, that I might be enabled to heal the errors, and comfort the spirit of this unhappy and mistaken man.

CHAPTER XVI.

My first object was to gain the confidence of Mr. Garstone; for it was, above all, important that he should not be prejudiced against the person who would endeavour to remove his prejudice against the Christian revelation. In this attempt, I had reason to think that I did not fail; and having secured his friendship, I lay in wait for an opportunity to use it.

I was not long in finding one. It was after the death of Mr. Ellerton, his friend and my friend. I spoke of his character, and of the loss we sustained in his removal, with the feelings of a friend, and of his prospect in a better world, with the hope of a Christian. I dwelt at some length on the assurance of our immortality, derived from the instructions and resurrection of Christ; and, with all the emphasis I could command, pictured the blessedness of a believer's hope. I could perceive that Mr. Garstone was moved. I had touched a string which vibrated powerfully to every word I uttered.

"These are delightful thoughts," he said, after a pause; "but——." He hesitated, and stopped.

I took the word from his mouth, "But there is no assurance of this truth, except from the voice of revelation. All is doubt, except from the instructions of Jesus Christ. His resurrection makes all clear."

"Mr. Anderson," said my friend, "my respect for you, and for the opinions of those with whom I live, has always prevented me from obtruding my own sentiments on subjects of this nature. You cannot, however, be ig-

norant of my mind; and it were better, perhaps, that we should be silent where we cannot agree."

I felt that this was the decisive moment; and, with a violent effort, said the first thing that occurred to me, lest I should be unable to say anything. "I know," said I, "that you have doubts as to the Christian revelation; but I hope they do not extend to the immortality of the soul. And I see not why we should not converse on the subject. I do long to know on what your doubts are grounded."

"I do believe in the immortality of the soul," he replied; "and, for this very reason, I cannot believe in the Christian religion. For, how can I suppose that immortal beings are formed by their Creator in a bondage so degrading and so hopeless as that system teaches —from which only a small proportion of them can ever be rescued, and they only by the sufferings and death of the Creator himself, in human form? How can I imagine him to be divinely commissioned, who proclaims to me such horrors—and yet calls them glad tidings, and a message of peace, though only calculated to harass and torment the soul, as they once did mine? It is true, he teaches the doctrine of a future life; but how can I believe in that life, suspended on so unequal conditions?"

He spoke with a deep and convulsive emphasis, that showed how strongly he felt. I asked him, if he saw no evidence in favour of Christ's pretensions?

He answered, that all the evidence in the world would not be sufficient to prove what all nature and reason contradict. "Who had tried to believe more than I?" he continued. "Who has more earnestly longed to believe? and who has been more wretched for want of be-

lieving? Yet I might as well have tried to persuade myself that I could walk upon a sunbeam. But it is all past: let us say no more about it. It is a subject on which I have not talked nor read for years. I cannot bear it."

But now that the ice was broken, and the first feeling over, I found him ready and disposed to converse, for he saw that he might entirely trust himself with me. I soon drew from him the acknowledgment, that there was much evidence in favour of the Christian system, too strong to be satisfactorily set aside; that the character of Jesus was inconsistent with imposture; "and not less so," he added, "with the doctrines which he taught;" and that a revelation was, in itself, neither an incredible nor an undesirable thing.

"Then it appears," I remarked, "that what decides you against it, is the character of the religion itself."

"Yes, together with its consequences—the divisions and miseries of its followers."

"How long since you made up your mind in this way?" I inquired.

"More than twenty years," was the answer.

"And during this period you have not pursued the investigation at all?"

No; he had avoided the subject as much as possible; had read no books—held no conversation—not once opened the Bible.

I asked him if he thought it safe to put this confidence in the decision of his youthful judgment, and to retain this obstinate prejudice on so momentous a subject? I reminded him that Christians differ in understanding their religion; and how could he tell that another interpretation of it would not solve all his difficulties?

He said, that in his view this very circumstance destroyed all its claims to the certainty of a divine origin; for if God should teach men, he would do it clearly, and leave no room to doubt his meaning.

I gave the obvious and satisfactory solution of this difficulty, drawn from the moral nature and probationary state of man; and then went on with the topic I had commenced. I endeavoured to show him, that the objections he felt to the Christian system were, in fact, objections only to a certain mode of interpreting that system; and that, therefore, he had no right to reject it, unless he had satisfied himself, from faithful inquiry, that this was the only true interpretation. "For myself," said I, "I freely declare, that I think it a very erroneous interpretation. I have hardly less dislike to it, than you have yourself. I think it an incredible system. But I still receive the instructions of Jesus with the greatest delight and comfort. You have shut yourself out from these, by taking the representations of your catechism for a true picture of the Bible, and never doing yourself the justice to ascertain whether they were so, or not." I went on to expostulate on the unreasonableness of this conduct; I illustrated, at large, my own views of the Christian faith; I explained to him their consistency with the noblest reason and the best affections, with all we delight to think concerning God, and all we ought to do as moral agents; and I entreated him, by all that is dear and sacred, to open his mind once more to inquiry; to read the Scriptures again; and try to welcome Jesus as the way, the truth, and the life.

I was very earnest, and I did not speak in vain. Mr. Garstone once more opened the book, which he had thrown

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by so long, and read it with the sober judgment of mature life; not interpreting it, as before, by the standard of Westminster, but by the light of a careful and sound comparison of itself with itself. Long and zealously he studied. Other matters were neglected—other studies put aside. Light on this great question he longed for, and sought after it far and near. He did not pause, till his mind settled in a firm conviction of the truth; and, with devout and happy faith, he could exclaim, *I believe that thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.* And he was able, afterward, to add, *Though I die with thee, yet will I not deny thee.*

From this time, he was an altered man. The change cannot be described, but it was evident in every habit of his life, and every feature of his face. His mind was at peace. He was happy. Often has he described to me the relief which he felt, as if a heavy burden was removed from his soul; and, instead of leaving the world a distressed and obstinate unbeliever, he died tranquilly, triumphant in faith, rejoicing in hope.

I have met with other instances not unlike this; and I find it refreshing to my soul, as the shadows of death approach, to reflect, that the faith which supports me, I have known to vanquish confirmed infidelity, and bring home to the Saviour those who had been wanderers from his peace. So let it support me in that hour!

CHAPTER XVII.

In the Spring of the year, it was rumoured that the old cottage on the hill, just at the edge of the village, was to be tenanted again. It had been for a long time out of repair, and considered not habitable. They must be exceedingly pressed with poverty, it was thought, who would be willing to make it their abode. And, as there is always supposed to exist an antecedent presumption against the wretchedly poor, it was a matter of lamentation, in the village circle, that we were to be troubled by vagabonds.

It was with no small surprise, therefore, that I was requested by an interesting looking girl, of about fourteen years of age, to come and see her mother, who, she said, had over-fatigued herself, and taken cold in moving into the cottage, and was quite ill, "We came but two days ago," said she; "and are quite strangers here. But mother said, the Minister is always the friend of everybody, and we can make bold to speak to him; so she sent me, Sir, to beg you will please to step and see her."

The modest and respectful manner of the girl, whose tears stood in her eyes as she spoke, touched me; and, taking my hat, I immediately accompanied her to the cottage. It was little better than a ruin. The roof and walls let in the weather; the casements were crazy, and the glass broken; the floors worn and unsafe; and the only habitable room gloomy and comfortless altogether. "It is but a sad place to which you have come," said I, as we approached it.

"I could hardly bear to come to it," said my guide; "but, then, mother says, that peace may be found in a hovel, when it flies from palaces; and contentment is worth more than splendour. We have seen worse things than this, as well as better. She teaches me to make the best of everything, as she herself does. But now she has got sick, in trying to fix up this poor old place. The work was too hard, and the weather too exposing."

It was even so. The appearance of everything, as we entered the door, bore marks of severe labour expended in the attempt to make the dwelling decent and comfortable. I was astonished that so much could be done in two days by two females. There was an air even of neatness in the apartment to which we were introduced. It was a small room, with but one window, of which half the panes were broken, and their places supplied by various substances, which shut out the light as well as the wind. The only furniture was a bedstead, three chairs, a trunk, and a table on which lay several books, evidently long used, but with care. The broken floor had been cleaned; and an old piece of carpeting was spread by the side of the bed on which the sick woman lay. The bedding was coarse, but perfectly clean; and it was impossible not to feel at once surprise and pity for one who seemed so capable of adorning a better lot, and yet was condemned to one so wretched. This was my first feeling.

The invalid raised her languid head as I drew nigh, begging me to excuse the trouble she had given me. "But I was sick," she added; "and a stranger in a strange place; and I knew no one on whom to call but the preacher of the Gospel. I need help, and advice,

and comfort. I have been cast off from the world, and have been seeking to fly to my God; and I felt that his minister would be ready to help me."

"It is our office," I replied, "in this way humbly to imitate our Master. We must bear one another's burdens; and I am happy that you applied to me at once. First of all, you need a physician, and I will send Dr. Bowdler to you immediately."

In fact her whole appearance indicated a state of aggravated disease; and after a few more inquiries, which served but to heighten my interest in the mysterious stranger, I took my leave. The physician attended. The disease gained ground. I was every day at the house, and every day increased my wonder and sympathy. Benevolent ladies in the village gave their kind attentions, and much was done to alleviate the united sufferings of want and disease. The patient endured with fortitude and cheerfulness, and, seemingly, with a spirit of religious acquiescence. At length the violence of the disorder gave way, and she became able to converse freely; but was evidently sinking and wasting into a settled decline. In my frequent conversations with her, I learned the circumstances of her past history, and the misfortunes which had brought her to her present situation. These were fully confirmed by testimony from other sources, and I soon felt that she had a claim upon the kindness of all who could serve her.

CHAPTER XVIII.

Mrs. Holden—for such I found the name of our invalid to be—was the daughter of a minister, in a small village near the metropolis. She was, unfortunately, subjected to the care of a step-mother, who sought to compensate for her want of affection and maternal fidelity, by care to forward her young charge in those external accomplishments which might most attract the notice of spectators, while the more solid and important branches of education were neglected. Gay, inexperienced, untaught, and regarding the world before her but a scene of enjoyment, she relieved herself from a guardian whom she despised, by marrying, in her seventeenth year, a handsome and dashing young man from the capital. Thither she removed with him; but, alas, not to realize her visions of felicity. Beauty and gaiety availed her little. Her spirits sank, and her bloom faded under the cares of a growing family, and unkindness of a brutal husband. Years rolled on, but brought no peace with them. The fireside had no comfort, and the evening return of him, who should have been her best friend, was the signal for tears instead of smiles. The morning had no cheerfulness in its beams, that roused her only to toil and weariness. And the lonely day of labour and privation was darkened by the anticipation of unkindness and abuse at its close.

Her life was thus wretched, without alleviation or hope. Her father died soon after her marriage, and she was left with neither brother nor sister, to depend only

upon a husband, who laughed at the oath by which he had bound himself to her, and sported in her misery, who had none to befriend her but himself. Her children —a *mother's* heart cannot be without something like bliss; but this, in hers, was bitter as the tears that fell in showers upon them, when she watched over them in her deserted home.

At length a new evil came upon her. Her two youngest children sickened, faltered, and died. In the same week, they passed away together, and slept in one grave. Even the father's soul was touched; and, as he wept with her over their pale forms, she enjoyed the first hour of domestic sympathy which she had known for years. But it was only an hour; and she felt herself doomed to drink a cup of tenfold bitterness, now that she had lost two of the only three objects which attached her to the world, or made life sufferable. She did not know, short-sighted woman, that her Father, who had given her the cup to drink, had also sweetened for her its draught.

A mixed feeling of pride, shame, and obstinacy, had made her for a long time, as it makes many, a stranger to God's house. Her thoughtless childhood and youth had given her no sufficient religious impressions; and when she could not go to meeting for display, she knew no desire to go for worship. The trouble and disappointment of her married state she had attributed solely to her husband's misconduct; and they had, therefore, never led her heart to God, but had rather been suffered to exasperate her spirit, and keep her in obstinate alienation from him. But now the cause of her sorrow was changed; she perceived it to be from a superior power, and her heart was softened. A

near minister came to pray at the funeral of her little ones; and, while she listened to the voice of his serious and affectionate sympathy, the remembrance of her early days, and of her father's prayers, came over her, and she wept convulsively. How often is the heart awakened by the recollections of a pious home, which had long been sleeping and dead! He visited her; he conversed with her; he spoke to her of her Maker; he revived her remembrance of a Saviour; he pointed out to her the light, the comfort, the promises, the peace of the blessed Gospel. She listened, and was persuaded. She perceived that she had found the friend whom she needed. She felt that no one need be alone or comfortless in God's world. She found occupation for her troubled thoughts, objects for her wandering affections, and was able to forget the irritations and trials of her lot; or, when she could not forget them, to bear them calmly and cheerfully. She had become a Christian; and, weary and heavy-laden as she was, she found rest to her soul.

"You who have always known the happiness of a religious mind," said she; "you, who have never had experience of the vacancy of soul which belongs to those who have neither comfort on earth, nor hope in heaven —cannot readily conceive of the change which now took place in my feelings, and my whole existence. I seemed to have come into a new world. Everything wore a new aspect. I could hardly believe it was myself, who was now bearing quietly what had before been an intolerable burden. I was astonished to find myself smiling and happy—not happy, perhaps, but contented—amid scenes which had before only irritated me, and made me wretched. My husband was still negligent and unkind,

my lovely infants were still among the dead, my days were still solitary, and my food scanty and poor. But these had become smaller evils, for my thoughts and affections had something else to rest upon. Religious truth had become interesting to me. The Sabbath led me abroad to worship, and thus gave variety to my life, excitement to my mind, and peace to my heart. The Bible, and other good books, gave me some new topic of wonderful and delightful contemplation every day. I was engaged, with an eagerness I never had felt before, in teaching and guiding my only surviving child, for I felt a new responsibility in her behalf. I thus became too much occupied to think of my troubles; or, at least, when sometimes they would intrude themselves, I had a refuge from them, and could drive them from my mind. When they were at the worst, I knew where I could find comfort, for God's ear was open to me; and, in pouring out my sorrows before his mercy-seat, I at any time, could relieve my full heart of its burden. Mr. Anderson," continued the invalid, checking the animation with which she had been speaking, "I freely say this to you, for you can sympathise with me. You will not count me either boasting or enthusiastic; for you know what is the power of religious trust. You feel what I mean, when I say, that the promise was fulfilled to me—*I will keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on me; because he trusteth in me.*"

I did, indeed, understand her, and rejoiced to witness the efficacy of that *faith which* OVERCOMES THE WORLD.

CHAPTER XIX.

I go on with the continuation of Mrs. Holden's history. It was appointed to her to endure a long and severe trial of her faith. She had felt, as all are apt to feel in the first experience of religious purposes, that she was ready for anything, that nothing could now seem hard to her, that no temptation could be too powerful for her, that any yoke would be easy, and any burden light. She little knew what Providence had in store for her. It pleased God to prove her severely, to try her in the hottest furnace of affliction; and it needed faith and fortitude, like that of the "three children" of old, to pass unharmed and triumphant through the flame.

When affliction does not soften and amend, it hardens and makes worse. Thus it happened to Mr. Holden. The death of his two children had been heavily felt by him, but not as the providence of God. He murmured and complained. His spirit was rebellious. His feelings were exasperated, as if wrong had been done to him. He became more irritable and sullen, and hurried with greater devotion than ever to the scenes of irregular pleasure; attempting thus to supply, from worldly sources, that void which his wife was seeking to fill from the living streams of heavenly truth. But he found them broken cisterns, which could hold no water.

In vain did his wife strive to lead him to those truths which were sustaining her. He obstinately refused to listen, and angrily forbade the very naming of the subject. And, although the serenity and evident content-

ment of her mind might have proved to him that the part she had chosen was, indeed, good; yet he sullenly endeavoured rather to destroy than to partake her peace. He was angry that she should be happy, while he was discontented. Her very sweetness and forbearance were new occasions of offence; and the more she submitted to his injustice, and strove, by mild patience, to pacify and win him, the more did he brutally persevere in wounding her feelings, and increasing her privations. Would that I were recording a strange and solitary case! But alas! many are the meek wives, and pious mothers, who have thus suffered beneath the unmanly persecution of men who had sworn to be their protectors, but who were afterwards wedded to pleasure and sin; and who vented their insane revenge even on the humblest means which were used as a refuge from their violence.

Mr. Holden proceeded from step to step, till he had forbidden the visit of the minister, and destroyed every book but the Bible, and that she was obliged carefully to conceal. These were grievous privations, and bitter were the tears which they drew from her. But she redoubled her diligence in the instruction of her daughter, and found her Sabbaths tenfold a delight. Even this, however, was to be denied her. In a fit of drunken brutality, he swore that she would go to church no more; and to make effectual his threat, he destroyed the few decent garments which she had reverently reserved for the service of the temple. This was a heavy cross; but a heavier yet was awaiting her. He had long threatened to remove from her their daughter, who, he said, should not stay to be spoiled by a moping, spiritless, whining woman. In vain she entreated, and prayed,

and resisted. Her misery was his sport, and he tore the child away—whither to be borne or by whom to be educated, she could not learn.

Her cup seemed now to be full. Every earthly solace was gone, every human hope destroyed. Alone, deserted, unfriended, nothing seemed left her but misery and despair. "For a long time," said she, "I was stupified and amazed. These repeated blows appeared to have stunned me, and I sat and walked with vacant and bewildered stupidity. But at last it occurred to me, that God had purposely withdrawn every earthly and visible good, that he might prove me, whether I could be satisfied with heavenly and invisible good alone; whether I could trust him, as I thought I could, in the darkness as well as in the light." This recollection brought her to herself. She humbled herself, and asked for faith. She stretched her eyes upward, and looked steadfastly on the clouds and darkness of the eternal throne, until she discerned the righteousness and mercy which rest at its foundation. She thus found peace; but it was sad, and trembling, and alarmed. She was like the timorous dove, that, fleeing from the violence of the vulture, takes refuge in the bosom of man; but, for a long time, flutters and trembles, unable to quell its agitation, though it knows that its hiding-place is secure.

There is a point beyond which the heart of an abused wife and a desolate mother is unable to bear. It must be relieved, or it must break. To this point the ill fortunes of Mrs. Holden had nearly brought her, when the overruling Power, which had permitted her trial, interposed for her deliverance. Her husband died the miserable death of a drunkard, brutish, delirious, hopeless—

without preparation or warning for himself, and with only horror and agony for his wife.

In the language of the world, this removal would be called a relief— and so it was, and so she could not but regard it. But what a relief! Only an exchange of sufferings. For when one has loved some object dearly and devotedly, been united with it for years, watched for it, prayed for it, suffered for it, there is nothing which can eradicate the affection from the heart. No unkindness can destroy it—no ingratitude or harshness can cancel it. It may be wounded and blighted; it may seem so crushed and broken, as never to revive again. But death awakens it to life. The early love of the young heart returns in all its strength; and sorrow for the friend whom we had once adored, is tenfold embittered by the thought that we must sorrow as those without hope.

When Mrs. Holden saw that life was departed, the feeling of former times rushed to her bosom, and she remembered nothing, but that he was the chosen and kind lover of her happiest days. All wrong was forgotten and forgiven, and she indulged freely in that reverie of grief, which feasts on the images of days that are past, and the shadows of pleasures that are long gone by. But from this the reality soon called her. The hope of finding her daughter occupied her whole mind, and the search for her became her only care. For a long time, it was in vain; and was successful at last, only by one of those strange turns of fortune which men call accident, but in which she was willing to recognise the hand of Heaven. "I had once," said she, "regarded the singular coincidences of life, as the mere

accidental creations of chance; but my suffering and my faith had made me wiser. I had learned to trace them to the kindness of my Father. And when my dear child, so long lost, so long sought in vain, and at length unexpectedly restored, was again folded in my arms—oh, I am sure that any one who could know how the rapture of that moment was enhanced by a certainty that God had done it, would earnestly seek to increase the happiness of life by an habitual acknowledgment of an overruling Providence. It brightens joy as much as it comforts sorrow."

CHAPTER XX.

The hasty outline which I have given of Mrs. Holden's history is sufficient to explain the character of the woman whose loneliness and sufferings drew the sympathy of the whole village. A life of disappointment, toil, and privation, had made early inroads on her constitution, which was now slowly sinking, in torture and pain, to a state of final exhaustion. But her spirit bore all cheerfully, and passed, with almost an angel's serenity, the fearful avenue to the grave.

"I cannot be sufficiently grateful," said she, one morning, "to the Providence which has cast my lot, unexpectedly, among so kind friends. I have every thing that I could wish; more than I need; and, oh, how much more than I deserve! After a stormy and perilous passage, I am not suffered to be wrecked, but am led to this quiet haven. And yet," she added, with

a sigh, "there is one thing wanting to my peace—one duty that my soul longs to perform."

"And what is that?" I asked.

"To commemorate my Saviour's love," she replied, "in his appointed ordinance."

I told her that I would willingly administer it in her chamber, if she wished; for, although not customary, yet, as a means of comfort and faith, it should not be refused.

"Alas," said she, "I have never made a profession of religion. I do not belong to any church."

I expressed my surprise at this, having taken it for granted, from what I had heard of her story, and perceived of her feelings, that she had long been a communicant in the church of Christ.

"It is not my fault," said she: "at least I trust not, for God knows how earnestly I have desired it. I thought it my duty; I longed for it, as my dearest privilege; I thirsted for it, as essential to the peace of my soul. But I have been debarred—if through my own fault, may God have mercy on me. But I trust not. I tried to remove the obstacle. I would have done it if I could, but I was unable. My conscience does not reproach me."

"What has this obstacle been?" I inquired.

"It has arisen from my religious opinions," said she. "When I received my first permanent impressions of religion, after the death of my dear children, they were owing, under God, to the sympathy and instructions of the worthy minister who visited me. At that time, when all was horror and despair within me, he showed me the character and providence of God, explained his dealings,

pointed me to his revelation in Christ, and thus led me to that trust and peace in which I have since rejoiced. But, before I could feel myself at liberty to profess my faith, the interference of my cruel husband had cut me off from all religious privileges. After his death, I removed to another place; and there I hoped to testify and strengthen my religious purposes, by a profession before the world, and communion with the Church. But my desire to do so was rejected."

"Upon what ground was it rejected?" said I.

"I will relate the circumstances at length," said Mrs. Holden. "After residing in the village nearly a year —for, in a situation of poverty and obscurity, I could not sooner be sufficiently known to the inhabitants—I made known to the minister my history, and, especially, my religious convictions, concerning which he inquired minutely, and appeared to be satisfied; but I found that, in order to admission to the church, I must give my assent to a particular list of doctrines, which were contrary to my convictions. This was a severe disappointment. 'Is there no dispensation?' I asked. 'Can I be admitted to my Master's table on no other conditions?'

"'On none other, certainly,' replied he. 'It is Christ's church, and I can dispense with nothing which he requires.'

"'And does he require all these articles to be believed?' said I. 'Some of them appear contradictory, some unreasonable, and some I do not remember in the Scriptures.'

"Mr. Welston seemed to be surprised, and endeavoured to convince me of my error. But the truths which had consoled and supported me, in which I had

rejoiced and hoped, were not the doctrines of a depraved nature, election and reprobation, and the saving of only a few, by the suffering, in their stead, of the second person in the Trinity. I had not so learned Christ, and was unable to assent to his expostulations. He, at length, told me that I needed to be humbled; that my pride of reason must be rebuked ere I could receive the testimony of God.

"This cut me to the heart. *I had been humbled*—thoroughly, bitterly humbled; and, if I knew myself at all, I was willing and glad to cast myself, unreservedly, on God's word. What else had I? Where else could I go? That word was everything to me. I had not a desire, or wish, or hope, except what rested there. To be thus suspected of proudly opposing it, to be accused of trusting to myself, when my whole heart leaned on God, seemed cruel. I felt it deeply, and wept bitterly.

"Here was a new trial. It seemed as if my faith must be, in every possible way, exposed, that it might be proved what it could endure. I found myself looked upon with an evil eye, and regarded as an enemy to that religion which was my only friend, and for which I was ready to sacrifice everything. I was treated as dishonouring my dear Lord, whose name was a precious balm to my spirit, and rebelling against the authority of God, to whom it was my first desire and study to be submissive. For the first time in my life, I found religious truth made the subject of controversy. I had got where the Christian standard was composed of party materials. I found that devotion, meekness, humility, charity, and good works, love to God, love to man, and an unspotted life, were not thought to constitute a disciple; and that

men judged of the Christian, not by the graces that he exhibits, but by the articles of faith he subscribes. My own case, therefore, was hopeless. I had been mainly anxious for the Christian heart and life, and my articles were of a different complexion. Unhappy as I was made, by being obliged to defend them, I yet could not renounce them; unhappy as I was, to be denied the privilege of owning and honouring my Lord, yet I had no alternative; for I could not assent to a confession which he had not taught me.

"Under this disappointment I have lived, year after year. Wretched, indeed, has it sometimes made me; more wretched now, as the end of life approaches, for my soul longeth, yea, panteth for the consolation of this communion with Jesus. I trust that it is not an act essential to my salvation; but I feel that it would greatly conduce to my peace. And all that I desire on earth would be complete, if this one further blessing could be allowed me, before I go hence."

It was one of the happy moments of my life, when I assured this pious sufferer that her desire should be granted. I had had abundant evidence to satisfy me that she exercised an acceptable faith; and the church did not hesitate to welcome to their communion one who was evidently to be, in so short a period, admitted to the higher communion of the church in heaven.

It was on the bright afternoon of a beautiful Sabbath, that, accompanied by a few friends, I visited the lowly abode of the dying believer, to administer this token of her faith, and instrument of her consolation. Her wasted form was supported by pillows, on the low bed. Her wan cheek was slightly flushed with the excitement of

expectation, and her eye lighted up with a peculiar and animated lustre. Her trembling daughter stood over her, and the silent company gazed with sympathy and admiration, till the holy service commenced, and then I trust that all hearts were absorbed in the act of devotion. It was a poor hovel, and a passenger might have cast upon it a look of compassion and disgust, at the wretchedness which must inhabit it. But the scene that was transacting within, where faith and patience were serenely waiting the summons of death, and religious friendship was kneeling around the couch, as an altar, and presenting supplications in the name of him that died for man—this was a scene at which it was a privilege to be present, and which more than changed the cottage to a palace. The whole soul of the dying believer seemed collected in her countenance. It seized upon and responded to every expression of faith, penitence, gratitude, and hope. And when the service was closed, and she sunk back exhausted, we gazed upon her face, as it had been that of an angel. She said, with a faint smile —"Now, I can depart in peace;" and, before the smile had faded from her cheek, death set its seal there for ever.

SEASONS OF PRAYER.

To prayer, to prayer;—for the morning breaks,
And earth in her Maker's smile awakes.
His light is on all below and above,
The light of gladness, and life, and love.
Oh, then, on the breath of this early air,
Send upward the incense of grateful prayer.

To prayer;—for the glorious sun is gone,
And the gathering darkness of night comes on;
Like a curtain from God's kind hand it flows,
To shade the couch where his children repose.
Then kneel, while the watching stars are bright,
And give your last thoughts to the Guardian of night.

To prayer;—for the day that God has blessed
Comes tranquilly on with its welcome rest.
It speaks of creation's early bloom;
It speaks of the Prince who burst the tomb.
Then summon the spirit's exalted powers,
And devote to Heaven the hallowed hours.

There are smiles and tears in the mother's eyes,
For her new-born infant beside her lies.
Oh, hour of bliss! when the heart o'erflows
With rapture a mother only knows.
Let it gush forth in words of fervent prayer;
Let it swell up to heaven for her precious care.

There are smiles and tears in that gathering band,
Where the heart is pledged with the trembling hand.
What trying thoughts in her bosom swell,
As the bride bids parents and home farewell!
Kneel down by the side of the tearful fair,
And strengthen the perilous hour with prayer.

Kneel down by the dying sinner's side,
And pray for his soul through him who died.
Large drops of anguish are thick on his brow—
Oh, what are earth and its pleasures now!
And what shall assuage his dark despair,
But the penitent cry of humble prayer?

Kneel down at the couch of departing faith,
And hear the last words the believer saith.
He has bidden adieu to his earthly friends;
There is peace in his eye that upward bends;
There is peace in his calm, confiding air;
For his last thoughts are God's, his last words prayer.

The voice of prayer at the sable bier!
A voice to sustain, to soothe, and to cheer.
It commends the spirit to God who gave;
It lifts the thoughts from the cold, dark grave;
It points to the glory where he shall reign,
Who whispered, "Thy brother shall rise again."

The voice of prayer in the world of bliss!
But gladder, purer, than rose from this.
The ransomed shout to their glorious King,
Where no sorrow shades the soul as they sing;
But a sinless and joyous song they raise:
And their voice of prayer is eternal praise.

Awake, awake, and gird up thy strength
To join that holy band at length.
To Him who unceasing love displays,
Whom the powers of nature unceasingly praise,—
To Him thy heart and thy hours be given;
For a life of prayer is the life of heaven.

THE VILLAGE FUNERAL.

It was toward the close of a fine day in the beginning of autumn, that I drew near a pleasant, retired village on the banks of the ————. The setting sun shone obliquely on the pure landscape, which was already changing its green leaves for the various hues of autumn, and seemed to vie in splendour with the glorious beauty of the western sky. The air was mild and still, and the interrupted cry of the birds, that answered one another plaintively from the fields, rendered the hour yet more impressive. My mind took an impression from the season; and as I passed pensively and slowly along, I was not sorry to find at the end of the village, before I entered it, a graveyard by the way side.

I had been musing on the changes of nature, and the close of the day and the year; and I was just in a suitable frame to contemplate the end of man. I alighted, and tied my horse, and went in to read the epitaphs, and learn how short a thing is life, and reflect on the worth-

lessness of posthumous praise. I found a new-made grave just opened, and waiting for its tenant. My thoughts fixed themselves upon it. For whom can this be? And I stood revolving the possible answers to this question, until approaching steps disturbed me, and a procession entered the yard.

I stepped aside to observe it. First came twelve young girls in white dresses, and with wreaths of evergreen in their hands. Then followed an old man, who proved to be the minister of the place, and who immediately preceded the bier, which was borne by four young men. Mourners, and a numerous train, succeeded. The procession proceeded to the grave; they gathered close around it, those that bare the body stood still, and placed it on the gronnd. Reverently was the pall taken off, and, in sad silence, the coffin descended to its place. The girls in white approached, and cast their wreaths upon it, and then lifted their voices in a low and mournful song, which gradually grew firmer and swelled louder, till it closed in a full peal of triumph.

I never had witnessed such a scene before; and everything was done so simply, so quietly, so naturally, that it touched me to the heart. I perceived that others were affected also; and it was not without evident emotion, that the venerable pastor uncovered his white locks to the wind, and lifted his tremulous voice. "It is well," said he; "it is well, it is fitting, that the fair and innocent should go to their home upon the wings of song, and that Christians should thus bid adieu to those whom they loved. While their spirits are welcomed by the hymns of angels above, it is right that our voices below should join the consoling and enrapturing strain.

"For, what are we laying in the dust? The body. It belongs there. That is its home. The weary soul has cast its cumbrous tenement aside, and ascended without it. All that we do is to hide it in its parent earth. This is not a work for sorrow and tears; when the spirit that dwelt there is rejoicing, it is not for those who loved it to be mourning. No; let the body go down to the dust as it was, and a solemn hallelujah be sung over its bed; for the spirit is gone to God who gave it. Death is swallowed up in victory; and the shout of victory should be joyous."

The old man's enthusiasm kindled as he spoke, and he lifted his fine head and pointed upward as if he saw the heavens opened. I gazed on him, and thought of Stephen, whose face was "as it had been the face of an angel." The stillness of death was upon all, as they looked, with almost religious awe, upon his prophet-like figure. Even the sobs of the mourners ceased to be audible. He presently turned his eye downward, and dropped his hand, till it pointed to the grave.

"This is a Christian's bed," said he; and it is a privilege to stand near it. Young she was, indeed; but how pure, how blameless, how lovely! The idol of her parents, the joy of her friends, the delight and example of all. She walked in her Master's steps—humble, holy, devout; and, with all the gentleness of his spirit, and all the peace of his hope, she heard the summons to depart. Life is sweet, said she, and I have much to live for; but I have a hope in heaven, and if God wills that I should exchange an earthly hope for a heavenly, why should I wish to delay? And thus she calmly cast herself upon her Father's will, and quietly breathed out her

spirit into his hand. She sleeps in Jesus, and is blest. And who would awaken her out of sleep? Who would call her spirit back to reanimate that cold frame, and mingle again in the toils of earth? Bright as were her prospects, brilliant as was the promise of her life, yet who of you would wish her to be restored to them? They might deceive and fail her, and leave her to a weary pilgrimage of loneliness and woe. But the prospects of the world to which she has gone cannot deceive her. They are sure and eternal. The soul that has tasted them would esteem the highest gratifications of earth insufficient and mean; and the soul that anticipates them, with the strength of Christian faith, knowing what they are, and that the departed idol of its affections is enjoying them, will think it profaneness to call the ascended spirit back. It is enough to enjoy the cheering hope of ascending also, and being joined again in the ties of friendship and love.

"Am I not right?" said he, turning toward the parents of the deceased, whose tears fell freely, but evidently as much from the fulness of religious emotion as from grief—"Am I not right? Is it not better to hope for that blessed re-union in heaven, than to have enjoyed her society on earth? You and I have many dear ones gone from us to the abodes of light. Here is another, whom I loved as if she had been my own, now added to their company. I have more of my dearest friends in heaven than on earth; and it makes death delightful to me in prospect, because it will restore me to the large circle of the good and the loved, from whom my protracted years have separated me. And this is the triumph of our holy faith—that the saddest, dreariest, most heart-

rending moments of life are the occasions of the noblest and happiest emotions that the human mind can experience. Even the dark and horrible sepulchre becomes a place of glory, and the burial of those that are dearest an occasion of exultation. Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift—the gift of eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord! Oh, how it has changed the feeling of this hour! For how could we have borne to surrender to the dust this precious and beautiful form, if we did not know that its more precious spirit survives? But now we give ashes to ashes and dust to dust, with a full hope of immortality: knowing that this corruptible shall put on incorruption, and death be swallowed up in everlasting victory. For as Jesus died and rose again, so, also, them that sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. Oh, that we might be all of that glorious number! Oh, that we might not only find comfort from this hope, as we think of the angel that has left us, but be quickened by it to live and die like her, that we may not be separated from her in the last great day."

The old man paused for a moment, and then said—"I did not intend to have spoken thus; but I was impelled, and carried away by that sweet hymn. My office is to pray; for what are human words at such an hour as this? Consolation and blessing come only from God. Of him let us seek them."

Every head was uncovered, and reverently bowed towards the earth, as the venerable man lifted his hands to heaven, and poured forth the language of Christian trust, hope, and peace. It was consonant to the sentiments he had been uttering. I could not help looking upon him as one standing between the living and the dead, and

speaking from the borders of both worlds. The last rays of the sun, whose disk was already touching the horizon, threw a glory upon his waving white locks, and seemed an emblem of his own spirit, just sinking to its rest, that it may rise to a brighter day. And, as I silently accompanied the departing crowd from the graveyard, I could not help recalling the train of thought with which I had entered it. Yes, said I to myself, the day closes in darkness, the year fades in desolation, and man sleeps in the dust; but there is a morning and a spring-time for all. Youth, that is cut down in its loveliness like a morning flower, shall bloom afresh in the garden of God; and age, that shines in righteousness till it sinks beneath the sod, shall rise again in glory, like the sun in the firmament. Blessed be he that hath abolished death, and brought life and immortality to light through the Gospel!

HYMN FOR EASTER.

Lift your loud voices in triumph on high,
For Jesus hath risen, and man cannot die!
Vain were the terrors that gathered around him,
And short the dominion of death and the grave;
He burst from the fetters of darkness that bound him,
Resplendent in glory, to live and to save.
Loud was the chorus of angels on high—
"The Saviour hath risen, and man shall not die!"
Glory to God, in full anthems of joy!
The being he gave us death cannot destroy!
Sad were the life we must part with to-morrow,
If tears were our birthright, and death were our end;
But Jesus hath cheered the dark valley of sorrow,
And bade us, immortal, to heaven ascend.
Lift, then, your voices in triumph on high,
For Jesus hath risen, and man shall not die!

HOW TO SPEND A DAY.

"Sweet is the destiny of all trades, whether of the brows or of the mind. God never allowed any man to do nothing. How miserable is the condition of those men, which spend the time as if it were given them, not lent; as if hours were waste creatures, and such as never should be accounted for; as if God would take this for a good bill of reckoning: *Item*, spent upon my pleasures forty years! These men shall once find that no blood can privilege idleness, and that nothing is more precious to God than that which they desire to cast away—time.—*Bishop Hall.*

CHAPTER I.

The day never broke more beautifully than on the seventeenth of April. It was one of those bright, delicious mornings, which occasionally take us by surprise in the early months, the more delightful because they stand out from the harsh and grating season, like the beautiful flowers of the cactus from their unsightly trunk. I think there was not a cloud in the whole sky; and as the light cautiously stole up from the eastern horizon, like the gentlest pencillings of the northern aurora, it presently spread into a wide, soft blush, which might remind the reader of Pope's Homer's rosy-fingered Morn; the air was silent and motionless, as if it were watching that fair phenomenon in the east; and, as yet, but one or two birds had opened their sweet throats to salute it. One of these, a melodious blackbird, was

"Why," replied Ellington, "it's very healthy being up early, and I suspect that I enjoy myself quite as well as you do."

"Nobody can enjoy himself till after breakfast. It takes for ever to get waked up, and one is always out of sorts till he has warmed himself with his coffee."

"Or his bitters?" said Ellington, smiling.

"No; you know I have not touched them this twelvemonth."

"Yes, thank God! I know it. But then you used to think you were not half a man till you had your glass;—you have found *that* was not true—and perhaps you would find the same true with the coffee."

"Give up coffee! Not I."

"No reason that you should; but I mean, you may find out, if you try, that it is not the only thing to make a man of you. An hour's brisk occupation would be a better tonic. You would be in better tune with yourself, in better tune for your breakfast, and for your family, and for your prayers."

David did not give this last hint without deliberation. He was on such terms with his neighbour as to warrant the freedom, and, indeed, the matter to which it pointed had been the subject of conversation with them before. Smith perfectly understood him, but, not choosing to reply, merely said, "I shall not work myself to death for anybody."

"Why, do you really think I am pining away, John?" said David, with a meaning smile, and looking at his stout hand as he stretched it out. Smith could not help smiling too, for the contrast with his own puny limb was a little too violent for gravity. "Well," said he,

"it may do for stout fellows like you, but you know that I could not bear it; it would kill me in a month. Ah, David, if I only had your constitution."

"It is a blessing to be thankful for, certainly, and I hope I am devoutly sensible of it. But it is not for the sake of the work that I am speaking; you very well know that I do not work more hours than others, nor so many as some."

"Yes, and that's what puzzles me. What in the world should possess you to get up every day before light, as if your life depended on it, when you could do all you do just as well, and have a comfortable morning snooze too?"

"Why, there's no mystery about it, John. I want the leisure, that's all. I want to take life quietly, and not be driven. I want to do something besides work. I do not think that a man was created for nothing in this world but to plane boards and drive nails, and then go home and sleep. He could do that, if he was made of cast iron and oak-plank. But being what he is, a thinking creature, capable of knowing something, and having a soul to live on, after all the iron is rusted and the oak rotted, he ought to be learning something else and doing something more. Therefore, I want time to improve my mind; I am not content to be ignorant; I want to know more of this wonderful world, and the wonderful truth it is full of. I feel that I shall be the happier for it; and not only so, but shall the better serve Him who placed me here, and sent his Son to save me. I cannot be willing to live and die, a mere axe-handle and turning-lathe; I want to be a MAN. I cannot bear to spend a whole life in doing nothing but earning money to pay

for my potatoes and cotton; I want to earn something which will last me when I have done wanting food or clothing. That is the reason why I try to arrange my time so as to get leisure."

"You are ambitious," said Smith, willing to give a turn to the subject which might prevent its pressing on himself. "I thought you were more contented with your lot."

"Ambitious! contented!" said David, with a slight emotion, and speaking low and deliberately, as if not knowing exactly how to understand his neighbour's remark; "yes, I am contented; not a man in the county has better cause for satisfaction with his lot. Have I not sound health, a happy home, a good trade, regular employment? Do you think, because I want to do something more than work at my bench, I am therefore dissatisfied with that work? No, I thank God, who gave me hands and the means of a pleasant and independent livelihood, I can do all this, and accomplish higher objects too. My ambition, as you call it, is not to get away from my business, but to prevent my business from stealing me away from myself—that is, from robbing me of my mind and my soul; which it would do, if I did not contrive to get some hours for other employment. Why what a mere shell of a man I should be at sixty, what a meagre, impoverished wretch, made up of nothing but bones and flesh, if I should do nothing, meantime, but sweat twelve hours a-day in the workshop, and eat and gossip and sleep away the other twelve! I should not be fit for any company worth keeping in this world, and I am sure I should be afraid to open my eyes in another."

"That other world seems to be a great bugbear in your way," said Smith.

David looked at him. "You know better than to say that; you speak against your conscience."

It was true enough; he spoke against his conscience; it was mere bravado. He felt the justice of David's words; he could not help feeling a sort of reverence creep over him as he spoke; he seemed to himself to be sinking down to insignificance in his presence; and, as men will do in such a state of feeling, he sought to get rid of the uncomfortableness by a stout answer, as if the sound of a brave sentence would encourage him. David's steady reply disconcerted him, and he looked as if he did not know which way to turn "Well," he said, "I did not mean exactly that; I am sure that I look to another life as well as any man. But I don't see why a man may not mind his business and get to heaven too.

"But, don't I mind my business?" asked David, smiling again.

"Yes; but what I mean is, a man's business is enough for him; if he does that, it's what God means he shall do; and the minister has told us a thousand times, that we can serve him and be religious, just as well at the plough-tail as in the Church."

"And that's very true: but the question is, what *is* a man's business."

"Why, his trade, to be sure, or his calling, whatever it may be;—his profession in life."

But do you really think that to spend ten hours in sawing and driving nails, as I do, or eight (or six—is it that you spend?), in the field, is all that we have to do

in this world? Do you really think God has given us nothing to do during the other fourteen, sixteen, or eighteen hours?"

"Why, we must be *good;* that's all."

"But, I don't see how we can be good, if we do nothing. I could not contrive to do good, and remain idle all the time too. I must be doing something."

"To be sure; we are always doing something," said Smith, hesitating, as he felt the shoe begin to pinch again.

"Yes, we are always doing something, good or bad; words, looks, feelings, are something, and they are all good or bad; and what I want is, to arrange such employment for my time, that I shall stand a good chance of resisting all temptation to *bad* looks, feelings, and words. Idle time, John, is the most ruinous thing in the world."

"That's not to the point; what I say is, that a man's business is his business; and that you have no right to say that he must do more than that, or he cannot be saved. That's the point."

"Suppose it's a mischievous business, an immoral business?" asked David; "what then?"

"Oh, then—certainly; because that is being a bad man."

"But he may pursue a mischievous business, and yet think himself honest, and doing right; may he not? Here is Squire Alrose, who made his money twenty years ago by a distillery, which has ruined more than one family, we both know; yet he did it conscientiously, and an honester, more well-meaning man never lived. He sinned for want of light."

"Very well," answered Smith; "and I think that he will be saved: he had no bad motives; he intended to do right."

"Then you think a man is to be judged by his motives and intentions?"

"Exactly so," answered Smith, briskly, very much pleased to get upon plain, safe ground—"exactly so." And he put his hand upon the fence, against which he was leaning, and, giving a spring, seated himself on it; he seemed to be almost as much in good humour as if he had actually swallowed his coffee.

"And pray," asked David, "what are the motives and intentions with which men pursue their daily callings—yourself, for instance? Is it not to get a living, to earn your bread? Don't you do just as much as you are obliged to do for that end, and no more? And if you could live without working, do you suppose you should ever plough another furrow?"

"No, I don't suppose I should; I tell you I would not drudge as I do, if I could help it."

"And I suppose that is the case with most men; is it not?"

"Yes, candidly, I think it is; I am quite of Mr. P.'s mind, who says everybody is just as lazy as he can be."

"I don't think it true of *everybody*," said David, "but it undoubtedly is of very many; they follow their trade for a living; it is their livelihood. All their motive and intention is to get on in the world."

"Yes," responded Smith.

"And a man is to be judged, you say, by his motives and intentions?"

"Yes."

"Then I do not see how you can hold, that a man's business is all the work he has to do in life. He would do it just the same if there were no God and no heaven. He *must* do it, whether he likes or not. He has no purpose to please God, or do his duty. Judged, therefore, by his motives and intentions, he is purely selfish and worldly."

"Just as if a man can't serve God in his business!" exclaimed the other, warmly.

"So he may; but then, mind you, it can only be by *intending* to serve him. If there be not the *intention*, there is not the service."

Smith looked as if a new thought had struck him. He was silent for a moment, and then said, in a little different tone from that which he had been using, "Then you think that I am all wrong, and I might as well be doing nothing?"

"I wish I could say I think you are right; but it seems to me, that on your own principles you are condemned. But of this you must judge for yourself. All that I want to say now is—for it is growing late, and we must not try the patience of our wives too far—all I want to say is, that I believe in my soul, we are put here to do much more for ourselves and others, than just to earn a living, or grow rich by a regular trade. We must turn *that* into the service of God by doing it with a religious heart, and we must contrive by other means to do some good and improve our minds. I do not think, considering that you and I can get a comfortable living as we can, that we have any more right to be *ignorant* than we have to be *dishonest*. No matter whether we become rich or not; but it would be a real disgrace to

go through life no wiser or better than we began it. So, in spite of all your alarm for me, I shall get up at day-break to-morrow, and study as well as work. So, good morning; and I advise you to do the same."

He turned away to depart, but stopped on hearing his neighbour mutter, "A pretty business it would be for a journeyman carpenter, and a day-labourer, to be thinking of such things as libraries and writing-desks!"

"Don't disparage us, John; we are men, are we not? we have eyes and souls, have we not? and did not God make us? and is there a scholar of them all, that looked more like a student in his cradle, or will in his coffin? Be more of a man, John, and believe that you have as good a right to know all that can be learned, and become as wise in the Holy Scriptures as the most favoured scribe in Israel. Have you read Dr. Channing on Self-Culture?"

"No."

"I'll send it to you. Read it; he has written out my notions exactly. Don't sleep till you have read it."

He went his way, and Smith jumped from the fence to meet his wife, who was wondering what this long conference could mean. "He is a strange fellow, that Ellington," he said to her as they passed into the house; "he is as set and religious as any parson; and yet he is as pleasant and easy withal as if he had nothing on his mind. I should not wonder if he had the right of it after all."

CHAPTER II.

The sun was well risen before Mrs. Ellington and her two little ones were awake. They who know the weariness that attends the mother's daily cares and nightly watchings, will appreciate David's reasons for indulging the slumbers of his wife after he had broken his own. So did she; and, being as energetic and conscientious in her sphere as he was in his, she found no difficulty in making all ready against his return from his morning's work. Accordingly, the children were dressed, and the house in order, and the breakfast prepared at the appointed season. "But why does not father come?" asked little Jemmy, who began to be impatient. The cause was evident enough when his mother, looking up the road, discovered him in earnest conference with John Smith; and while she waited, wondering at the lengthened talk, she congratulated herself that he was not one of the race of husbands that are discomfited and soured by an overdone breakfast. "It's well that you are not like Uncle Giles," were her first words to him as he entered, "or I should tremble to see you, after breakfast had been kept waiting half-an-hour."

"I hope I never shall be such a fool as to be unhappy for such a cause," said David; "it's a comfort to have got above the luxuries that tempt to ill-temper. As long as we indulge in no niceties that can be spoiled by waiting, we shall run little risk of spoiling our tempers."

"That's one of the blessings of being poor," said his wife.

"So it is, as long as we have enough; and a man can always have enough if he will be content with what he has. Let us read the very chapter that tells us of this." And, opening the Bible, which lay ready for him on the breakfast-table, he took Jemmy on his knee, while Jane held the baby, and read the last chapter of the First Epistle to Timothy. A few words of thanksgiving and prayer followed, and they seated themselves to their frugal and cheerful meal. How might thousands, who sat down that morning to their sumptuous tables, envy the happiness of that neat cottage, though they would wonder at and pity its poverty! When will men learn that the real gain is "godliness with contentment?"

"And, after all," said David, as they sat deliberately discussing their decent repast—for he used to say, that rational creatures, who can talk, have a right to spend five minutes more at their meals than the hogs, who can only eat—"after all, I am not sure that we should not be gainers by greater frugality. You may laugh, dear; but soberly, if, in the warm weather, we should only drink water and eat cold bread, how much toil over the fire you would be saved! We should then need no fire. And this, besides saving your labour, would save fuel, and sugar, and coffee; so that by autumn, I could afford to buy that book we want so much. And a good book is as well worth having as a cup of coffee."

"I don't mind the work, David," said his wife; "so that my labouring over the fire is no reason; but after all, as you say, I had rather spend half an hour in reading than in cooking; so that, if you think it won't hurt our health, I should like to try it."

"O, if it hurts us, we can just go back to the old way.

And if it agrees with us, we shall be able to procure some other indulgences beyond the book. I declare, I feel as if I was the richest man in the village already. I wonder how many of our neighbours feel as if they could afford to buy the Bridgewater Treatises."

"Uncle Giles will think you crazy."

"Ay, and I believe neighbour Smith does already. By the way, I promised him a book this morning."

"A book!" exclaimed Jane, laughing; "a book for John Smith! Do you suppose he will read it?"

"Why perhaps not; but I do not despair of him—his case is not hopeless; and if he can only be excited in the right way, he may come to something yet. He is free to talk and willing to listen—that's something.

"Something, to be sure, but very little to put in the scale against long habits of indolence and self-indulgence."

"But his conscience is not dead," said David, "and he sees that he is going behindhand, and it is a good moment to try to help him up. So I must not forget the book."

"What is it?" asked Jane.

"Self-Culture. He sneered at the idea of men like us trying to study, and I thought this would set him right. So let me have it and go. And as I have lost nearly an hour this morning, let me have some bread and cheese for dinner, that I may stay at noon and make up for it."

Away trudged he, accordingly; and his wife having cleared away the room, drew forth her morning's work. A pleasant sight it would have been to peep in and watch her that morning—and it was not very different from all her mornings. There she sat at the table, at

work on a suit of clothes for her husband; the Bible lay open beside her, as I have often seen it in the abodes of humble life, and she cast her eyes upon it from time to time, to imbibe a verse that might direct and cheer her thoughts. The children were on the floor, frequently claiming her attention, and calling for the exercise of her ingenuity to prevent them from interrupting her employment; till, at length, wearied out with their play, they both fell into a long sleep, and the happy mother sat watching their cradle, and working and thinking, as full of enjoyment as if there were neither want nor sorrow in the world. How blessed is the lot of a well-governed, contented mind, in a vigorous and healthful body! The pampered and self-indulgent know not the latter, and are strangers to the former. *Godliness with contentment is great gain.*

Meanwhile, David was as busy and as happy amidst his task at the unfinished house; not able, indeed, like his wife, to catch glances at a book every moment or two, but occupied with a quiet train of pleasant thought, which realized the expression in a favourite hymn of Doddridge, which he was fond of singing as he worked:—

"And while the world our *hands* employs,
Our *hearts* are THINE alone."

He had no idea that it could be necessary to confine down his mind to the mechanical work before him; he cultivated the habit of thinking. He was accustomed to say, "My definition of a right man is a man perpetually *thoughtful*. Ruin begins in the neglect of the thoughts." Thus, in fact, his hours of labour were hours of study; for his mind was busy on the subjects of his reading, and he made himself more thoroughly their master by

reflection. Not only so, but he availed himself of every leisure moment to add to his stock another fact or a new idea, from some volume which he carried always in his pocket. And now, accordingly, when noon arrived, and toil ceased, and his fellows went away to their dinners, he first refreshed himself with his frugal fare, threw himself for a time at full length on the boards, in complete repose, and then, taking his book, occupied in reading the half hour that remained before his companions returned.

So passed on the laborious and tranquil day—every moment turned to good account, and the mind provided for no less than the body. So its hours rolled away, till the descending sun gave token of the coming night, and brought the season of labour to a close. One is almost ready to pronounce it the happiest hour of the twenty-four, when the setting sun sheds his parting beams over the earth. There is a peculiar serenity and sweetness in the air. The last chirping of the birds, and the lowing of the returning cattle, fill it with the very spirit of contentment. The weary labourer moves homeward, amid the lengthening shadows, to his waiting wife and children; throws off his burden, and enjoys the exquisite repose of love with those that are dear. The evening twilight imparts a beauty indescribable to the sky and to the earth; but it is the association with labour finished and families meeting, which gives to that hour its most affecting charm. To what thousands of our race does it bring the solace, their only daily solace, of a few short hours of rest and love!

David felt all this, as he walked homeward to his cottage, which contained for him a welcome, such as only

an equal affection could offer to the highest and proudest —an affection, without which the palace is a desert, and with which the peasant is more than a prince. No one who could look into his heart at that moment, beating as it was with contentment, love, and devotion, could doubt that the greatness and riches of the world are dross, in comparison with the kingdom of the inner man. And as he sat by the side of his wife and little ones at the neat repast, while the sun threw in his last smiling rays upon the cheerful group, one would almost doubt whether it could be a fallen world, or whether the bower of Eden overshadowed more simplicity and peace.

"You have just missed of seeing Uncle Giles, said his wife; "he has been here this hour, and hardly left when you came in."

David expressed his regret, and asked why she had not detained him to tea. "Oh," said Jane, "it was in vain to ask him; I fancy that we are a great deal too sober and frugal for him; he thinks us very mean and wretched, you may depend upon it."

This was true enough. Uncle Giles was one of those persons who measure manliness and generosity by the freedom with which men spend upon themselves. To keep a good table and make a respectable show in dress, is spirited and noble; to practise frugality and self-denial, no matter for what cause, is mean and stingy. There are a great many persons of this class—persons who will make any sacrifice of real comfort for appearance' sake, but who wonder with infinite amazement at the man who will sacrifice any appearance for the sake of a moral or intellectual good. To such a one a character like David Ellington is a complete puzzle. Uncle

Giles knew that he was a sensible and kind man, and a good workman; all the more strange that he should have such out-of-the-way notions about living. He really and sadly thought his niece to be an object of commiseration, in having become the wife of a man below her in rank, who seemed to care nothing about rising in the world, who was content with a one-storey house, and esteemed books and knowledge more than riches or enjoyment. He had come to condole with her on her unfortunate condition; matters seemed to him to be growing worse and worse, and he would be glad to interfere, and bring about some change which should restore her to the position she occupied before her marriage. Jane could not help being amused at his unnecessary sympathy, while she appreciated his affection. "Indeed, uncle," said she, "you mistake the matter entirely; I never was so happy in my life. It seems to me that I have got into Paradise before my time, life is so easy and joyful to me. There is not a thing that I could alter for the better."

"Ah, Jane," he replied, with an incredulous shake of the head, "you young wives will say anything rather than have it suspected that your marriage disappoints you. But I am sure you may trust your own uncle. And don't I see with my own eyes? Are you not mewed up here all the day long, working and drudging, and just to scrape along, because your husband chooses to spend all his earnings on those trashy books and instruments? Don't I know that you have given up all the generous living that you were used to, and are deprived of almost the very essentials of a decent meal? And where are the pleasant parties, and the brisk dances?

Instead of them, here you sit, poring over your Methodistical books along with your Methodistical husband, till, I verily believe, you will think it a sin even to smile on your own baby."

"Ay, ay," said David, when his wife repeated to him this conversation, "so it is—when men can do nothing else, they contrive to affix an obnoxious name; and one is a Methodist and another an infidel, according to the effect they desire to produce, or the ill-feeling they wish to vent. How many good men have been sacrificed to this petty persecution! Not that I think," he continued, laughing at his own earnestness, "we are *persecuted* by your good uncle; but I could not help reflecting how this same self-satisfied ignorance, in a wider sphere, has occasioned half the sufferings of the church. If Uncle Giles really *knew* how the case stands, he would not talk and feel so."

"So I told him," said Jane. "Said I, 'You should come and see with your own eyes, and judge from actual observation. There are different *tastes*, you know; and our mode of life might not suit your taste, but so long as it suits ours, we may be very happy in it; and if you would but come and see how entirely happy we are, and how full of cheerfulness and even fun, you might still wonder at our taste, but you would no longer be uneasy about us.'"

"I heartily wish that he would do so," said David, "but I fear there would be little prospect of convincing him. He has lived too long in the habit of regarding superficial enjoyment as the chief good, to perceive any attractiveness in sober and mental pleasures."

"But it is not too late for him to be touched with juster notions of religion."

"No, not too late; it is never too late, I suppose, strictly speaking. There is an infinite power in divine truth to overcome any heart, if rightly introduced to it. But the difficulty is to introduce it rightly to one who has always, on principle, resisted it, and who prides himself on having the most sensible and rational notions. How are you to get at him? He is impenetrable."

"True; he looks down upon us with a sort of self-complacent pity, as being in a delusion. He thinks that religion consists in going to meeting on Sunday, and keeping up a reputable appearance; any particular attention to it beyond this he regards as downright fanaticism."

"And fanaticism is to be despised. Therefore it is that men of his class are among the most hopeless. I should much sooner expect to see John Smith a hearty and devoted Christian. He is not hardened by the self-conceit of fancied attainment; he has never imagined himself a religious man. He may therefore be touched. And I do not mean to lose a speedy opportunity of continuing this morning's talk."

"But you must choose a better time for it than before breakfast. You spoiled his wife's temper for the whole day. She prides herself on her breakfast-table too much to bear such a delay."

"Why, to be sure," said David, "it was rather unreasonable; and I have been thinking, for other reasons, that I must alter my plan a little. I am too much interrupted in my reading during the day; and, now that the evenings are growing short, I think it will be best to do my studying before breakfast. Then I shall have the day for work, and nobody can interrupt that. I shall then be a man of leisure for my work," he added, while

he moved away from the table and began to romp with his children, "as Walter Scott was for his friends, after having done up his chapter before anybody was stirring."

So this change of plan was settled; and, after a hearty frolic with the little ones, the happy father composed himself to study, with a readiness of attention, and avarice of time, that even Bowditch himself hardly surpassed. The children were then quietly put to rest, and the cottage set in order; and the wife, at length, placed herself at his side, and he read to her aloud, and they talked of what they read, until the hour came for retiring. Then the day, which began in praise, was ended in prayer, and night and sleep sank down together, with a benediction of repose, on the simple-hearted, unambitious, and devoted pair.

LINES.

It is not what my hands have done,
  That weighs my spirit down;
That casts a shadow o'er the sun,
  And over earth a frown;
It is not any heinous guilt,
  Or vice by men abhorred;
For fair the fame that I have built,
  A fair life's just reward;
And men would wonder if they knew
How sad I feel with sins so few.

Alas! they only see in part,
  When thus they judge the whole;
They cannot look upon the heart,
  They cannot read the soul;
But I survey myself within,
  And mournfully I feel
How deep the principle of sin
  Its root may there conceal,
And spread its poison through the frame,
Without a deed that men can blame.

They judge by actions which they see
  Brought out before the sun;
But conscience brings reproach to me
  For what I've left undone,—
For opportunities of good
  In folly thrown away,
For hours misspent in solitude,
  Forgetfulness to pray,—
And thousand more omitted things,
Whose memory fills my breast with stings.

And therefore is my heart oppressed
  With thoughtfulness and gloom;
Nor can I hope for perfect rest
  Till I escape this doom.
Help me, Thou Merciful and Just,
  This fearful doom to fly;
Thou art my strength, my hope, my trust,—
  Oh, help me, lest I die!
And let my full obedience prove
The perfect power of faith and love.

HOW TO SPEND HOLY TIME.

CHAPTER I.

[SATURDAY EVENING.]

One can hardly picture to himself a more grateful scene than is presented by the close of Saturday afternoon in the country. Everything seems to indicate satisfaction at approaching repose. The labourers, as they return to their homes, bearing the implements of toil, and attended by their cattle, carry, in their very movements, signs of pleasure that their toils are ended. The weary oxen, as they step sluggishly along, appear conscious of their weekly respite; and the softening light of the west sympathizes with the feelings of the sentient creation. As one looks upon such a rural scene at the close of a bright summer's day, while the increasing stillness intimates that it begins to draw toward the first day of the week, he may well be reminded of Southey's beautiful description of the "holy night,"

> "When all created things know and adore
> The Power that made them; insects, beasts, and birds,
> The water-dwellers, herbs, and trees, and stones,
> Yea, earth and ocean, and the infinite heaven
> With all its worlds. • • • • The prayer
> Flows from the righteous with intenser love,
> A holier calm succeeds, and sweeter dreams
> Visit the slumbers of the penitent." *

* Thalaba, IX.

It was on such an evening, when the sun had just given his parting look to the blooming and weary world, that David Ellington had come home from his work, and was seated with his little family at the evening meal. The day had been sultry, and the air was close and oppressive. Jane had therefore taken the table out from the confined apartment into the open air, and spread it under the shadow of the great tree behind the house. There they sat in the cool of the calm twilight, their spirits as even as the hour; and some philosophers might be puzzled to know whether the expression of the scene had done most to give the temper to their minds, or the state of their minds bestowed its beauty on the scene. David and Jane were no philosophers; but the thought naturally occurred to them, and they gave the question their own solution.

"One would almost fancy," said Jane, "that the very sky and air were full of feeling and thought. How can they have so much expression of the soul, without any soul?"

"He who made them," replied David, "cannot but give an expression to all that he makes; it all bears the mark of his hand; it is, therefore, adapted to excite feeling in the souls who observe it. The works he has made are suited to the souls he has made."

"And it seems to me that they address the heart just as words do. They mean something, and the eye receives their meaning, as the ear receives the meaning of words. It seems to me there is no difference, excepting that words are more distinct."

"In that respect, the beauty of such an evening as this is like poetry, which suggests sentiment rather than dis-

tinct thought; or, perhaps, more like music, which brings on a certain state of feeling, and not a definite train of ideas. A piece of music stirs up my feelings, or puts me in a reverie, and so does a beautiful prospect, or a sweet summer's evening."

"That reminds me of what we read of Wilberforce the other day. Speaking of flowers, he said that they seemed to him like the smile on the Father's countenance. So all the beauty of the sky and the earth is like the smile of God; and a smile shows us the disposition of the person just as certainly as any words he can use. This accounts for the *expression* I spoke of. One cannot sit down in the midst of this loveliness, without being conscious that it is a divine presence which makes it lovely."

"As Cowper says," pursued David,

> "'His presence who made all things fair, perceived,
> Makes all still fairer.'

But if one perceive not his presence, a great element of beauty and pleasure is gone."

"The beauty remains, and the divine expression is in it; but the capacity is wanting to perceive it. If we had no eyes, we should know nothing of it; if we had only eyes, without feeling, we should know little of it; and we know most of it at those hours when our hearts are most softened by holy thoughts and devout affections. There is never so much beauty in it as on the Sabbath, or perhaps on the Saturday evening, when we are enjoying the luxury of a passage from toil to repose."

But it will not do to repeat all that was said, though it might help to show how easily the simple and thoughtful can turn to a spiritual channel the conversation sug-

gested by casual circumstances. If men would speak out more freely what is passing within them, there would be less idle talking.

It was not long before they were interrupted by the arrival of their neighbour, John Smith. John had evidently been making an effort at improvement since his morning conversation with David; and he occasionally sought an opportunity to renew the talk with him. So he dropped in now, as he said, just to pass away an hour in friendly chat; for he really did not know what to do with himself.

"The fact is," said he, "Saturday evening is the hardest night in the week to get rid of. 'Tis not exactly reputable or proper to be pushing about in the same way as on other evenings, and yet one does not like to be moped up at home. It is neither work-day nor Sunday."

"What is it then?" said David.

"Why, it's something between the two."

"That's the beauty of it to me," said David, "and the very reason why I like it. It is particularly delightful to have a little season of transition between the common affairs of the world and the sacred duties of the Sabbath. I should not like to rush suddenly and without preparation from the one to the other; and this quiet evening is an excellent time for preparation."

"But, for my part," answered Smith, "I do not see that any particular preparation is necessary; and I have heard you say a hundred times, that a good man will live so as to have every day a Sabbath as well as Sunday, and be ready, at one time as well as another, to join immediately in prayer."

"Not a hundred times, John; perhaps two or three."

"Well, not exactly a hundred, to be sure," said Smith, smiling at David's precise way of correcting his extravagance in speech; "not exactly a hundred times; but I am sure I have heard you say so, and I have heard it from the pulpit."

"Very true; and I will not take it back. A man should make every hour holy, and be every minute prepared for worship or for death. But very few men have ever reached such a perfection; and, therefore, we have no right to act as if we had, and put aside special occasions of preparation. We need them so much the more now, because we hope, by-and-by, to need them less."

"But don't you suppose that one would get on faster if he were to begin with making all days alike?"

"No, not at all; and for this reason—if he were to begin so, he would make Sunday like a week-day, and not the week-days like Sundays; he could not avoid this. And just so it has happened with all that I ever knew attempt to act on this principle. It was perfectly impossible for them to live every day a life of sober, devout, contemplative deportment, such as belongs to the Sabbath and to Heaven; they were not advanced enough in holiness for that; and, therefore, all they could effect towards making all days alike was to make Sunday a common day. By this means they did make all alike, but they deprived themselves of a great aid to religious improvement, and their characters perceptibly lost ground. Instead of getting six more Sabbaths in the week, as they pretended to do, they lost the one they had."

"Then I don't see but that you would give up the six days to the world, and confine religion to the seventh."

"I did not say that, did I? And you don't suppose I meant it, do you?"

"Why, perhaps not; but I don't see why it does not follow. For you allow men to be less religious on other days than on Sunday."

"No, that is not what I mean. A man is never allowed to be anything else than a religious man; he may not be irreligious any day. But, then, when he is in the midst of business, and so forth, in common life, he is likely to have his thoughts diverted, and his feelings ruffled, and to be put off his guard, and be tempted in a hundred different ways. He must be very strong and confirmed in a holy life to be able to get through it all without offence. And how is he to become strong enough? By the help of the Sabbath; by resting, thinking, reading, worshipping, on that one day, away from the world, and in communion with God. He will then go back to the world stronger and stronger every week, and thus make every week more and more like a perpetual Sabbath. Just suppose, if you please, that a man were once a week taken away from the earth and transported into heaven; that there he joined in the pleasures and conversation of its pure inhabitants, and learned to make an exact comparison between their condition and that of men upon earth. How would he feel on returning to the world? Would he not look on it with different eyes? Would he not go about its business with his thoughts full of that better world, and would he not be anxious to live so as to become worthy of possessing it hereafter? Why, John, if you were to spend every Sunday actually among the blessed spirits of heaven, you would be haunted by the thought of it all the week long,

and, after a while, you would find no happiness in a day which was not spent in as devout a frame as any Sabbath. Don't you think so?"

"To be sure," said Smith; "it could not be otherwise; that is clear enough. And I do not think I should be sorry if it happened to me."

"For I suppose you are not satisfied with your present state," said David, in a tone of half question.

"How can I be?" John asked; "and yet I do not see how I can help it. What can a poor ignorant man like me do."

"That brings us to the very point," said David. "If you could spend one day a week in the real heaven, you think you should have little difficulty; and I think so to. But as that is impossible, you must do the next best thing—which is, to use the Sabbath for the same end. It seems to me that this is precisely the design of it, and that it may have precisely this effect. It is intended to be a minature heaven, a specimen of what shall be—an occasion for showing the contrast between a worldly and a divine life; and if you will so occupy the day as to get yourself fully into its spirit, and to taste the enjoyment of a serene and worshipping frame of mind, you will find yourself affected by it on Monday and Tuesday; all life will take a complexion from it; and the renewing of this state of soul every Sabbath for months and years, will, by-and-by, make it the settled state of your soul. So that at last you will live just as if you had really gone up to heaven once a week, and seen with your own eyes its glories."

"But do you suppose that heaven is a mere place of rest and pious meditation, do you? It seems to me it

must be something more; there must be something *doing* there."

"Yes, undoubtedly; but, then, whatever is done must be in accordance with a certain state of mind and heart. That state is essential to the happiness of heaven; neither the work of heaven can be done without it, nor its pleasure enjoyed; so the important thing is, to get the soul into that state. When this is accomplished, the satisfaction and the activity will follow. And this I think is the excellence of the Sabbath. Six days we are to labour and do our work; we ought to do it in a religious spirit; and that we may be able so to do it, the seventh is made a holy day, which may send us back to our work refreshed and thoughtful."

"Just as Watts expresses it in one of his hymns," said Jane, when he says that public worship is '*like a little heaven below;*' and then he adds,—

"'Not all my pleasures, nor my play,
Shall tempt me to *forget* this day.'"

"But, for my part, unhappily," said Smith, "I do not find Sunday so much like heaven; and I forget it almost as soon as it is over."

"How happens that?"

Smith said he could not account for it; he supposed it was so with most people; he could not find that Sunday had much influence on men during the week. This led to a good deal of discussion on the value and operation of Christian institutions, and the cause of their apparent inefficiency. A great many reasons were assigned, some very obvious, some very frivolous; but all, taken together, showed a quantity of obstructions, on the part of

society and of individuals, which made Jane say, at last, that it was almost wonderful Christianity had any effect at all; for it seemed to be the business of men to counteract it as much as possible. "If they were to set themselves, on purpose, to destroy its impression," she said, "they could hardly invent surer means of doing it, than by the habits they at present indulge."

"There is a sad mistake in all this thing," said David; "and for aught I see, it is growing worse every day. Even those from whom you would least expect it, fall into the current, and help to promote the evil. It is only last week that Mr. Hertson, on returning from the city, was telling me of what took place there lately. A great party was given on Saturday evening, where were dancing and other amusements till after midnight. The street was crowded with carriages, and the noise and confusion interrupted the repose of the whole neighbourhood. And who do you suppose were guilty of this indecency? Who were they that committed this outrage on the feelings of the sober people of the city, and the established manners of the place? Why, you would suppose, of course, it could only be the merely frivolous and worldly, who hold in scorn all serious things. And so I said to Mr. Hertson. But no: he said there were present many persons of respectable standing; church-going people, who counted themselves good Christians; communicants, who professed to love the institutions of religion, and to be desirous of their good influences. There they were, desecrating the holy season by untimely revelry, disturbing the quiet of their more devout neighbours, and bringing a scandal on the cause of religion."

"But I dare say it was done thoughtlessly," said

Smith; "I do not suppose they *meant* to do all this harm."

"Thoughtlessly!" cried David. "What right could they have to be thoughtless in so grave a matter? That is itself a sin in a case like this. To go to work deliberately, by a preparation of several days, to spend a whole night in unfitting themselves for public worship, and then to plead that they did not think of doing harm, is a ridiculous aggravation of the offence. It proves that they had no proper sense of the meaning and worth of the Sabbath, either to themselves or others. If they had, they would have cut off their right hands before they would have done what was so certain to unfit them for the right use of the next day. I should like to know how many of them stayed away from church in consequence; how many slept at church; how many were thinking all church time of the pleasant or unpleasant occurrences of the evening, instead of worshipping God. I should like to know what was the state of the house in which the indecorum was perpetrated, and who was responsible for the waste of time, and the ill example to the domestics and dependents. Mr. Hertson says that he was told such things are not common; but it is clear that whoever introduces or countenances them ought to be regarded as an enemy to the community in which he dwells, and an abettor of irreligion and sin."

"But we do not have such doings out here in the country."

"No, thank God; but if other bad fashions of town get into the country at last, this will too. And, indeed, I fear that we have not much to boast of. We do not throw away our holy opportunities in the same manner,

but we are far from using them as we should. Even you, John, who are one of the quiet people, began with complaining that Saturday evening is a heavy time, and now you add, that Sunday is not very profitable to you. And why? The only reason must be that you misuse it. You do not make it a business to prepare for it as it approaches, and to make the most of it as it passes."

John admitted that this was the case, and added, that he should be very glad to be guided to the best methods. The conversation did not come soon to a close; but what its purport was and what were its results, cannot now be related.

CHAPTER II.

[SUNDAY NOON.]

A REFLECTING Christian often wonders at the apparently trifling efficacy of religious institutions; he perplexes himself to comprehend how it is that such multitudes hear preaching, and yet so few profit by it. A greater wonder is it, at times, that he himself should be so little the better for his attendance on services of whose value he thinks himself deeply sensible. The minister occasionally tries to explain the matter in a sermon; but his explanation is only partially satisfactory: what seem to him the chief causes do not appear such to men in more exposed walks of life, and the speculations of different active men on the subject differ as much as their various

personal experience. Some ascribe it to the weakness of the preachers, and some to the inattention of the hearers; some to internal, and some to external causes; and many, in striving to satisfy their minds on the point, forget to keep a watch over the only causes which are of any moment to themselves.

It is not strange, therefore, that, when Mr. Hertson had preached a sermon from the text, "The word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in those who heard," there was a good deal of speculation among his hearers as to the justness of his views. Some thought that he refined too much, some that he was not sufficiently discriminating, some that he made too much of faith, some that he was not sufficiently practical, and some that he did not make allowance for the hindrances which the world throws in the way of piety. So they began at the church-door, and, as the several parties separated on their way home, they carried on the discussion. If it be one aim of a preacher to make people think, he certainly had hit the mark that once at least.

As no one in the parish lived farther from church than David Ellington, it happened that those who walked the same road with him kept up the discourse during the whole distance; and he had an opportunity to hear opinions on the different points that were started. When this had been done, and neighbour after neighbour had dropped away, each at his own threshold, Jane turned to her husband and said, "So, if we may trust what we have been hearing on all sides, preaching does no good, and yet nobody is to blame for it."

"Except the minister," replied David.

"Nay," said his wife, "even Dr. Pillerton, who spoke

most harshly, acknowledged that, after all, the preacher does enough to be the making of any man who would take heed to his words. So that, for aught I see, the minister also is free from blame, like everybody else; and we have only to wonder how this dreadful waste of religious influences is to be accounted for."

"And yet, meantime, nothing is more easily accounted for, if you will take it up in single cases, and examine them one by one. Men are puzzled, because they want to see through all Christendom at once; but they will find there is no puzzle at all, if they will just sit down and each decide his own case. Describe to me any man's life, and I will tell you at once why it is that preaching does him no good."

While he was saying this, neighbour Smith, who had been walking ahead of our carpenter and his family, and, now that none else was in their company, desired to join himself to them, had turned back and caught the last sentence. He, too, had evidently been musing on the topic of the day, and gave vent to his feelings by exclaiming bitterly, "I don't believe that it does anybody any good."

"Why, Mr. Smith," exclaimed Jane, "you speak as if you had received a personal affront."

"Then I am sure I ask pardon," said John. "I spoke quick, to be sure, because I had been trying to make it out straight all the way, and I can't do it. I don't see why preaching should not do good, and yet I'm sure it never did any good to me, and I do not see it does much good anywhere. Now, take this very town, and go over it from one end to the other, and count the people on your fingers, and consider"——

David interrupted him. "That's the very reason you get so puzzled; you undertake too much; you would explain the case of a thousand people at once, when, perhaps, you are hardly able to explain one. Let us take one at a time. Let us begin with John Smith; and, when we understand his case, we will go to his next neighbour, David Ellington, and sift him; and so on, from door to door."

"Well," said John, "it's chiefly my own case that I care about, and that makes me feel so bad. I don't know that all the sermons I ever heard have done me the least good in the world."

"Very well; now the question is — Why? Is it because the sermons were poor, and unable to do good?"

"I cannot say that of all of them. Some poor preaching I have heard, and I have heard some very fine preaching that was worse than the poor; but, on the whole, there has been more that was good. And that, in fact, makes the difficulty. Sermons are very excellent, for the most part—very; and yet they don't make me any better."

"Then we must seek another cause. I had a neighbour once, who possessed a considerable house, and a capital lot of ground to till,—orchard, mowing ground, cattle, and a wife who was an admirable dairy-woman. There was not a man in the town who had a better opportunity to lead a thrifty, forehanded, prosperous life. What was the reason that he did not? People wondered, when they looked at his fine farm, why in the world it was that the poor man was always behindhand and going down hill. What was the reason? It could not be the farm—what was it?"

John did not answer, for he more than suspected that his friend was beginning to make a parable out of his own history.

"No," continued David, "it was not the farm that was in fault, but the farmer. He did not use his opportunities; he neglected his land; he lounged about, doing nothing, and talked, and smoked, and drank; and as he grew poorer every year, he kept wondering how it could be that so fine a farm could not support him in plenty and ease."

"He found out at last," whispered John.

"Yes, he found out at last; and then what did he do? He just attended to his business; gave up idle and dissipated habits, and minded his farm; and then he had no difficulty in winning from it a handsome support. Now, you are doing with preaching just as you used to do with your farm—neglecting it; and how in the world can you expect it to do you good? How can you be so foolish as to be surprised that you have no grain to reap, and no abundance on your board, when you have not sowed the seed, nor tended the crop?"

"But that is not quite fair," replied John. "I do not neglect preaching; there is not a man in the village more constant at meeting than I am."

"Just as you used to live on your farm—always at home, never away from the homestead; but that availed nothing, while you were an idler. And so in this case. Of what use to be at church, if you do nothing more? Sitting there, and taking into your ears the voice of the preacher, is no better than sitting by your back-door and musing on the beauty and fertility of your lands. Nothing can grow up in either case, if this is all you do."

"But that is not all I do."

"Perhaps not quite. You used to go out to work sometimes, and plough and hoe a little, just enough to keep off actual starvation; and about as much as this you do in religion. But suppose you were to make a business of it, as you did of your farm, when you took the right turn; suppose you were now to make the most of these religious means, as resolutely as you did of your goodly lands, do you think you should find reason to complain any longer that you get no good of them?"

They walked on for some moments in silence. John was evidently getting a little new light on the dark subject, which inclined him more to muse than to speak. But he presently felt the silence to be growing awkward, and he therefore broke it, somewhat at a venture, by saying that, after all, he did not perceive that he was so very negligent; he could not see but that he did as much as other men.

"*As other men!*" cried David. "There is the rock on which so many are lost; they compare themselves to 'other men.' But you have already said, that *they* are not profited by preaching; how, then, can their case be any guide for you? It only shows how they are lost, not how you can be saved. Look to yourself for the present. One at a time, as I said before. Let us settle the case of John Smith before we undertake any other. And now to begin at the beginning, let us just remember what preaching is for. Is it to be listened to or to be practised upon?"

"To practise upon, certainly."

"Very well. Which do you do? You listen, but do not practise."

"Why, there now," said Smith, "that is the very thing I am lamenting—that I do listen, and yet my practice is not affected."

"To be sure," said David; "you expect the practice to come of itself; you take pains to go and hear, which is the least part of the business, and take no pains to return and act accordingly, which is the essential thing. You think *this* is to come of itself; just as you used to fancy that looking at your fine farm, and talking and boasting about it, would do as well as working upon it. You recollect what we were saying the other Saturday evening, about the improvement of that season? Well, you acknowledged that it never occurred to you to use it as a preparation for public worship. The same of Sunday morning. Without any preparation, then, you go to church and hear the sermon. How? That you may learn something? that you may receive some wholesome advice? that you may be raised to a better way of living? No. You merely *hear*. You just sit and listen. In at one ear and out at the other, as the saying is. Do you think about it afterwards, muse on its truths, try to recall and re-impress its doctrine, and turn its advice into practical rules? I suppose you never pretended to do this. You have not dreamt of anything more than just to hear the sermon. So it is with thousands; therefore, no wonder that they are none the better. It would be a wonder indeed if they were. Why, the plain fact is, neighbour Smith, that you and they are doing all you can to *prevent* preaching from doing you any good. If the devil had hired you to help him to defeat the ordinances of God, you could not have contrived a more effectual means. To enter on them with-

out preparation, to attend them without any purpose or effort of self-application, to think no more of them afterwards, and to spend the rest of the day in visiting, talking, eating, riding, or thinking, just as on any other day—all this seems as if expressly designed—a careful plot—to destroy the impressions of God's house, and to prevent the two hours of worship from interrupting the dominion of earth in the soul."

"That's rather a long sermon, husband," said Jane.

"And a pretty close one, too," added Smith, soberly. "But it is all true, every word of it. Yet I do not see how I can help it. What can I do? What shall I do?"

"I can tell you what rules help *me*," replied David, "and I dare say that by observing them you will find yourself essentially benefited. Will you try?"

"Let me hear them, and I will tell you."

"They are three. First, listen to the preacher *religiously*; that is, in a devout frame of mind, as if you had just said your prayers, and were holding out your hand to receive the blessing you had asked. Secondly, apply it to yourself all along; say *Amen* to every truth, and say *Yes, I will*, to every good advice. This will excite a strong interest in the matter. Thirdly, think it over *afterward*. Don't go at once about other things, and forget it all, but retire by yourself, and recall what you heard and felt; consider what you ought to do in consequence; and lay out a distinct plan of doing accordingly during the week. Then make it a regular part of every day's business to think over and act upon that particular lesson, and so mix it up with all your prayers, and all your work. Follow these rules, and you never will say again that preaching does no good."

"I believe so," said Smith; "and I will try them. But I am afraid I never shall have resolution enough to succeed."

"Do it in faith, nothing doubting; or, if you doubt yourself, do not doubt God, but pray for his blessing till you receive it."

They had for some time reached David's house, and were pausing at the gate to finish their discourse. As they now turned away to separate, Smith stopped, and cried out, "One word more, neighbour; pray, tell me if you observe these rules yourself."

David hesitated a moment, and then, with an expression of countenance that was half sadness and half a smile, he said, "The question is a very fair one, though I do not see that the answer can affect the goodness of the rules."

"But then I shall have the more courage to undertake them, if I find that they are real things, and not mere words."

"Very well; I told you that they had helped me; and they have unspeakably; but I do not live up to them fully—I do not fully live up to any of my good purposes. But this I can tell you, solemnly—that it is only by living by them that I ever gained anything, and I have always found myself a loser, just in proportion as I have slighted them."

HYMN.

Rev. iv. 2, 3; xv. 3.

Around the throne of God
The host angelic throngs;
They spread their palms abroad,
And shout perpetual songs.
Him first they own,
Him last and best;
God ever blest
And God alone.

Their golden crowns they fling
Before his throne of light,
And strike the rapturous string,
Unceasing, day and night.
"Earth, heaven, and sea
Thy praise declare;
For thine they are
And thine shall be.

"O holy, holy Lord,
Creation's Sovereign King!
Thy majesty adored
Let all creation sing;

Who wast, and art,
And art to be;
Nor time shall see
Thy sway depart.

"Great are thy works of praise,
O God of boundless might!
All just and true thy ways,
Thou king of saints, in light!
Let all above,
And all below,
Conspire to show
Thy power and love.

"Who shall not fear thee, Lord,
And magnify thy name?
Thy judgments sent abroad,
Thy holiness proclaim.
Nations shall throng
From every shore,
And all adore
In one loud song."

While thus the powers on high
Their swelling chorus raise,
Let earth and man reply,
And echo back the praise;
His glory own
First, last, and best,
God ever blest
And God alone.

A SABBATH WITH MY FRIEND.

CHAPTER I.

HAVING purposed to make a journey of considerable length, which, for a lover of home, is a great undertaking, I thought it a favourable opportunity to renew my acquaintance with my old schoolmate, Cornelius Benson. At school and college we were familiar friends; but it was now twenty years since we had met. Our fortunes in life had cast us far from each other, and the circles in which we moved never crossed. I had heard occasionally of his progress in life, and knew that he had been fortunate in his calling, was possessed of a comfortable property, and had the respect and confidence of his neighbours and friends. Indeed, we had never ceased to take an interest in each other's welfare; and I, without hesitation, availed myself of the opportunity to pass a little time at his house. As I must, of necessity, pass a Sunday away from home, I felt that it could not be done more pleasantly than in the family of a friend. Sunday is peculiarly a *home* day with me. The quiet of the day, and the quiet of the family, seem to belong together. Domestic peace and religious peace are twin sisters, and both the Sabbath and the fireside seem to have lost a main charm when they are separated from one another. It was making a sacrifice of feeling to be absent from

home on that day; but as it was unavoidable, where could the sacrifice be so light as in the family of an old friend?

It was just at the setting of the sun on Saturday evening that I reached my friend's dwelling, and received the hearty welcome of himself and his family. The fine manliness of countenance which had distinguished him in youth was still to be remarked, a little affected by the passage of time, and by the thoughtfulness which had settled upon it. His wife was neither beautiful nor otherwise, but had that serene and cheerful expression which indicates happiness around and peace within. Three children, the oldest of eleven years, had nothing uncommonly prepossessing in their appearance; but their good manners and intelligent faces augured well of the government which had been exercised over them, and led me to expect, from the first moment, a well-managed and happy family.

When the bustle of my arrival was over, I perceived that I was not to be treated, in any degree, as a stranger, nor to interfere with the usual domestic arrangements of the house. This is a genuine hospitality, not understood by many, which puts the visitor at his ease, and proves to him both that there is a system in the family, and that his presence is no burden. Instead of laborious efforts to make me feel at home, and the pains-taking confusion which arises from striving to enforce regulations which are put in practice at no other time, everything went on with a quiet order which proved that order was habitual. The youngest child was put to bed immediately after tea; the elder were placed at the table with their books for the morrow's lesson; and the mother sat by them

industriously at work, freely joining in the conversation between her husband and myself. It all spoke so much for the usual order of the house, and caused the first impression to be so favourable, that I could not help writing down these trifling appearances. Trivial circumstances are often decisive indications of habit and character to careful observers.

"When we are pleasantly employed, time flies." The evening was passed before we had nearly exhausted the stock of pleasant recollections which are such delightful topics to old friends, after the separation of years;—and the clock struck nine. Mr. Benson spoke to his daughter, who brought to him the family Bible, and called in the domestics. The mother put by her work, and each member of the circle followed the master of the house, as he reverently read from the sacred volume, and then, in a serious and affectionate manner, addressed the throne of grace.

There are few things which affect me more than such scenes as this,—where the most interesting circle, on the most interesting spot of earth, kneels at the mercy-seat, with the father for the priest. I cannot contemplate the scene without emotion. I am amazed that any one, who knows anything of the power and peace of religion, can pass by a duty which is so singularly calculated to maintain its power and bestow its peace. And yet, alas! even with this feeling, I know that it is possible sometimes to neglect it.

I could not help expressing to my friend the satisfaction which I felt. "Perhaps," said he, "you little expected to have found in me this habit; for though always religiously disposed, yet, when you knew me, I could

not be called a religious man. This is one of the blessings which I obtained by my marriage. My wife urged it. I yielded to her wishes, what I might not, perhaps, have granted to a sense of duty, and what, if I had not done at first, I might, like thousands, have neglected to do at all. I became interested in it; it affected me, and led me very gradually, but surely, to a religious and devout frame, which has become my chief happiness."

"It is the experience of many," said I; "and yet how many refrain from it, through a merely false shame in beginning!"

"False shame," he replied, "has ruined more souls than unbelief."

But I do not mean to pursue our conversation, which led on from topic to topic, till the lateness of the hour warned us to retire.

Mr. Benson had informed me of the Sunday regulations of his house, and I was, therefore, not surprised to find the family risen and assembled at an early hour. It is a custom with many to indulge themselves with a later sleep than usual on this day; and I have not been inclined to censure it in those whose severe toils, during the week, have been unremitting, and whose bodies need the kindly rest of the seventh day. But I have often wondered that religious people, who can plead no such excuse, and who know the value of religious exercises, should so frequently squander hours of the Sabbath morning in sleep, which, on other mornings, would have been devoted to active duties. Not so my friend. "If I can rise for gain," said he, "I can rise for devotion; and I wish my children to learn that religion is a waking

and a thinking happiness, not a drowsy and slothful one."

The same mode of thinking seemed to be consistently acted upon throughout the operations of the day. I have never seen a household which seemed to me better fitted to be a model, or where the Sabbath seemed at once to be so truly a delight, and so perfectly to answer the purposes of its institution. The morning devotions, though longer than I have sometimes known them, yet were not made tedious. The master of the house interested his little audience by making remarks as he read, by asking questions of the children, and entering into conversation on the subject of the chapter. This saved it from being a merely formal service; and I have seldom known so evident and deep interest taken in the Scriptures, as was expressed in the attentive eyes and pleased countenances of the family group.

After breakfast was over, Mr. Benson assigned the tasks for his children, who quietly sat down to their study; and, to my surprise as well as gratification, Mrs. Benson also engaged herself with reading, which she interrupted only for the purpose of instructing the children, until the bell rang for worship. I was charmed with the quietness of this hour, and wondered how it had been redeemed from the bustle and confusion by which it is marked in many families. But I found the secret a very simple one. It was the resolution to relieve the day from all labour not absolutely necessary, and to devote it to mental and religious improvement. In the first place, no time had been lost in bed, so as to shorten the morning and waste its hours in the hurry of preparation for church. In some families there is nothing

but washing and changing clothes, and brushing coats and shoes, and perhaps even the last stitches to be put into some rent garment, or a button or a string to be replaced to make all "tidy." And in the midst of these various operations, which bear the aspect, in the children's eyes, of being the most important of the day, and which are just finished in time for meeting, the affairs of the kitchen are to be attended to, and the mistress must give directions for dinner, and see that the pudding is prepared, and the sauces made ready. So that, instead of quiet, it might seem a little bedlam, and but a miserable preparation is made for mingling in the worship of God's house.

This was managed better at my friend's. "All that relates to cleanliness and clothing," said Mrs. Benson, "is done the day before, and the children are dressed for the day on rising. Thus the hour preceding service is without interruption, and neither our thoughts nor tempers are disturbed by unseasonable cares. This I consider an excellent habit for my children, as it teaches them to value the day for its true objects, and prevents them from thinking, as many do, that they go to church to show their clean clothes. It redeems time, also, for their studies; for their tasks are thus learned the first thing, before their little minds have been distracted or wearied; and then, for the remainder of the day, pleasant books are put into their hands as a reward and encouragement. Much is done in this way to form a taste for reading, and to make all their associations with religion delightful."

"And you succeed in this?" said I.

"Perfectly, thus far," she replied. "I believe it is

the happiest day in the week to them. Nothing is suffered to occur which shall irritate them; all occasions of annoyance are removed; and we study a variety in their occupations, which prevents anything from becoming tedious."

"But there is still another advantage in this arrangement," said her husband. "It redeems time for our own improvement, as well as for that of our children and domestics. This quiet interval, in the cool of the morning, is a golden opportunity. Many are the volumes which we have read together, which we never should have opened, if we had passed our Sabbath mornings as many of our neighbours do. Even my wife," continued he, "has thus been able to acquaint herself with books on divinity, which few men have read."

I wish that this hint might be enforced upon the attention of our female friends. It happens with many ladies, that, after they are at the head of families, they fancy they have no time for the further improvement of their minds. Their domestic cares are as much as they can attend to; and, submitting to this as a sort of necessity, they lose what taste for books they once had, and dwindle down into very commonplace and ignorant women. Now, there seems to me a great fault in this; and without enlarging on the subject, I will only say, that, if they will follow Mrs. Benson's plan, and redeem the Sabbath morning from waste, they will find it sufficient to keep alive their taste for profitable reading, at the same time that it will form, or at least help them to retain, their devotional taste. And how much might be gained, both to the relish and the profit of the sanctuary, by the calm state of feeling and the prepared

sobriety of spirit, with which they would then go up to the house of God! for want of which, the prayers, the music, and the exhortations of that place, are so often attended without interest or effect.

CHAPTER II.

After the morning had passed in the manner I have already described, the hour of public worship arrived, and we went forth to church. Here, too, I found the same consistency which I had remarked before. It was a principle with my friends to make everything give way to the moral purposes of the day; and while none could be further from superstition, they yet carefully avoided whatever might deprive any one of its full advantages. Therefore every member of the family was allowed to go out to public worship. Not even a domestic was left at home to prepare the family meal, but all were present in the house of God.

"We shall make no stranger of you," said Mrs. Benson to me, "but pursue our usual course. We are accustomed to such a dinner, on the Sunday, as may be prepared in a short time after returning from worship; for we are unwilling, for the sake of a gratification of the palate, to deprive a domestic of any opportunity so important to her. Her privileges, at best, are few, and it seems a pity to abridge them that we may dine well."

"Indeed," said Mr. Benson, "it can be called no sacrifice on our part, and we should be ashamed to regard it as such. He must be miserably given to his

appetite, who thinks it a hardship to dine, once a week, on cold meat or a beefsteak. For myself, I count it a gain; it sits light, and leaves me the power of attention, and enables me to take as much pleasure in the afternoon as in the morning—which would not be the case if I feasted as many do. I know something of this from experience. In the family in which I lived, when a young man, Sunday was a day of special good living. It was made a point to have a better dinner than common; an extra course was provided, and a dessert followed. Consequently, more was eaten than common, and I always found the afternoon preaching excessively heavy and fatiguing. It was a general remark in the family, that the good parson always preached worse in the afternoon, and in a very soporific tone. But the whole fault really lay in our heavy dinners, which would have put us to sleep beneath the voice of St. Paul himself. At length it happened that the master of the family thought it not worth while to go to church at all in the afternoon; he was sure, he said, that he could get no good from such drowsy doings, and it was quite as well to stay at home. I was of his mind for a time; but when I had come to a better knowledge of religion, I discovered that my habit of indulgence was in fault, and that any day is better for a feast than a day of religious instruction.

"Not that I suppose there is any sin in the thing itself, or that a man is to be condemned for merely eating a better dinner than ordinary on the Sabbath. No such thing. But a man does very unwisely to unfit himself in this way, or in any way, for the best improvement of the day."

"Or its best enjoyment either," said I; "for how can one truly enjoy it, who goes to church with an overloaded stomach and heavy eyelids? If one might judge by their deeds, I should fancy that half the families of my acquaintance were expressly contriving how to render unprofitable this most valuable hour of worship."

"I am glad that you enter into my views," he replied; "indeed they cannot but approve themselves at once to every man, who will permit himself seriously to weigh the matter, and is not ashamed to do differently from other people. The only question is, whether or not it is desirable to secure the greatest amount of moral good from the means which are in operation. If it be, as every one will allow, then the common habits of the people in this respect are unwise.

"Let us take this town," he continued, "as an example. It contains about seventeen hundred inhabitants, which make not far from three hundred families; so that three hundred well and able-bodied persons are kept from public worship every Sabbath, for the purpose of cooking dinner. Can this be at all worth while? Would not the cause of improvement and happiness be promoted, by allowing these persons to be constantly exposed to the influence of Christian instruction?

"The number present at worship in this place is probably, on an average, from six to seven hundred—less than half the population. And I believe that in no parish can we calculate that half the people are actually present at one time in the house of God. The aged and infirm, the sick and the small children, with those who are required to attend upon them, are necessarily absent. But these certainly would not, on an average, constitute

more than two to each family. Thus, then, we account for the necessary absence of six hundred persons in this society. Add these to the seven hundred present, and we have thirteen hundred. Where are the rest? Three hundred are engaged in preparing food.

"Hence we may calculate, that, in Boston, with sixty thousand inhabitants, probably not far from ten thousand are deprived of the benefit of religious instruction from this single cause. In New York, with a population of one hundred and seventy thousand, the number cannot be short of thirty thousand. Now, what advantages are gained to counterbalance this evident loss? Why should religious people so thoughtlessly cut off a part of their families from this means of knowledge and improvement?"

In consequence of acting upon these notions, I found that the season of intermission was redeemed for improvement as the morning had been. A pleasant conversation took place with the children respecting the services of the morning, which was designed to refresh their memories, and encourage the habit of attention, and thus give them an object of interest at church. Many children grow up without habits of attention, from not having been taught *how* to attend, or having any sufficient motive set before them. I was gratified with the eagerness and readiness with which my friend's children replied to his inquiries, and the evidence which they gave of having been accustomed to this exercise. To the two oldest it had become a pleasure, and was a great means of improvement. They regularly wrote a brief account of the discourses of the day, which was read to their parents, and corrected or improved by them.

This employment was made pleasant to them, and, being a regular and expected exercise, prevented the day from hanging heavily upon them, and passing away listlessly. Great pains had been taken to save it from the appearance of task-work, and make it voluntary. This, indeed, was a principle in the whole domestic management; and I saw abundant proof of the correctness of Mrs. Benson's observation—that parents may render any occupation interesting to their children, by taking interest in it themselves, and sharing it with them.

CHAPTER III.

The cheerful quietness and entire consistency of my friend's arrangements for the day, put my mind into a frame peculiarly favourable for its religious enjoyments. It produced a more than usual portion of that

"Heavenly calm within the breast,"

of which the hymn speaks, and which, though so seldom found, seems so truly the appropriate privilege of holy time. How much depends on the state of our minds! At another time, I might have fretted at the preacher as common-place, dull, and wanting in matter; but now, everything sounded well, and I received it with interest. The complexion of my friend's home had passed into my heart; I was in good humour with everything about me, and was ready to resolve, that if such serenity could flow from a wise arrangement of the day, I would not fail to put in practice the hints I had received.

I had fallen into a musing posture, as thoughts like these passed through my mind, when we had just returned from the afternoon service. I was interrupted by the cheerful voices of the children walking in the garden, near the window where I was sitting. I looked at them for some time, as they passed backward and forward, playfully, but not noisily, and thought that I had never seen happier countenances. They were glowing with "the sunshine of the soul." There was evidently a restraint upon their movements, and they did not indulge in loud and violent pleasure. But the restraint was plainly voluntary, dictated by their own feelings, and with no harshness in it, to render it galling to them.

"This is their time for recreation," said Mr. Benson, observing that I watched them. "Constant confinement and silence might render the day tiresome to them, and its return unwelcome; and God forbid the Sabbath should be so to a child of mine. No, let it be a delight; and, in order to render it so, there must be recreation. I, however, make a distinction between the pleasures of this and other days, in order to connect with every hour of it a sacred association. Make it both pleasant and sacred, and it never will lose its hold upon the heart."

We pursued the conversation, and the children were left to themselves till we were summoned to an early supper. "We neither fast nor feast to-day," said Mrs. Benson; "but we have one small luxury at tea. We think it well to connect as many pleasant associations with the day as possible. Our children never see this dish at any other time."

"But will you not lead them," said I, "to set an undue value on the gratification of appetite?"

"That might happen," she replied, "if *we* seemed to value it highly, or talked about it as a thing of consequence, or ever used it by way of reward or punishment. But we do neither; we simply introduce it as a matter of course, because it is Sunday; they regard it as doing honour to the day; and it seems to mingle itself, in their minds, with the pleasant recollections of the season, and be lost among them."

But I should never cease were I to record all the good hints which were dropped in the course of conversation, or repeat everything which made an impression on my mind. I must hasten to the end.

When this happy meal was finished, I had an opportunity of witnessing the mode in which the day was closed by these careful parents. First, questions were asked respecting the religious exercises of public worship, and the instructions of the day were recapitulated and enforced in familiar conversation. Then the brief lessons which had been learned were recited—not from memory only, but care was taken that all should be understood, and what the children did not appear to understand was patiently explained to them; and this in so kind and familiar a way, that it excited their interest, and produced no fatigue upon their minds. It was done much more in the way of conversation than of formal recitation. The subject was *talked about*, and the children seemed to feel that they were partakers in what concerned themselves. When this was over, each was called upon to repeat some hymn; and I never shall forget the feelings which were excited by the manner in

which one of them was closed. I had never seen the hymn before; but its simplicity, and beauty, and appropriateness to the circle in which the little lisper recited it, won my heart from the very first verse. And when she came to the end, and took her brother by the hand, while all the brothers and sisters joined in a circle, and repeated together with her the closing lines—

"Brothers and sisters, hand in hand,
Our lips together move;
Oh, smile upon this little band,
And join our hearts in love."

I cannot describe how affecting it was. I was overcome. I was melted. And I saw that tears stood even in the eyes of the parents, who had heard it repeated a hundred times. I felt as if such a prayer, from such a cherub band, must indeed have a prevailing power, and I could almost fancy that I heard a kind voice whisper, *Of such is the kingdom of heaven.*

After a minute's pause, the father read from the family Bible, as on the preceding evening; and then all united in singing an evening hymn, which I found always made a part of the worship at this season. A fervent but brief act of supplication and praise followed. As it closed, the setting sun poured his last rays upon the wainscot, and disappeared beneath the horizon—as if to cast his parting smile upon such a scene, and rejoicing to carry with him the record of a family so employed. And thus the day ended—to me a memorable one; to be numbered with those which I contemplate with satisfaction, and on which I never look back without being ready to exclaim, "*I have gained a day.*"

TO THE URSA MAJOR.

With what a stately and majestic step
That glorious constellation of the north
Treads its eternal circle! going forth
Its princely way amongst the stars in slow
And silent brightness. Mighty one, all hail!
I joy to see thee on thy glowing path
Walk, like some stout and girded giant—stern,
Unwearied, resolute, whose toiling foot
Disdains to loiter on its destined way.
The other tribes forsake their midnight track,
And rest their weary orbs beneath the wave;
But thou dost never close thy burning eye,
Nor stay thy steadfast step. But on, still on,
While systems change, and suns retire, and worlds
Slumber and wake, thy ceaseless march proceeds.
The near horizon tempts to rest in vain.
Thou, faithful sentinel, dost never quit
Thy long, appointed watch; but, sleepless still,
Dost guard the fixed light of the universe,
And bid the North for ever know its place.

Ages have witnessed thy devoted trust,
Unchanged, unchanging. When the sons of God
Sent forth that shout of joy which rang through heaven,

And echoed from the outer spheres that bound
The illimitable universe, thy voice
Joined the high chorus; from thy radiant orb
The glad cry sounded, swelling to His praise
Who thus had cast another sparkling gem,
Little, but beautiful, amid the crowd
Of splendors that enrich his firmament.
As thou art now, so wast thou then the same.
Ages have rolled their course, and time grown gray;
The earth has gathered to her womb again,
And yet again, the myriads that were born
Of her uncounted, unremembered tribes.
The seas have changed their beds—the eternal hills
Have stooped with age—the solid continents
Have left their banks—and man's imperial works—
The toil, pride, strength of kingdoms, which had flung
Their haughty honors in the face of heaven,
As if immortal—have been swept away—
Shattered and mouldering, buried and forgot.
But time has shed no dimness on thy front,
Nor touched the firmness of thy tread; youth, strength,
And beauty still are thine—as clear, as bright,
As when the Almighty Former sent thee forth,
Beautiful offspring of his curious skill,
To watch earth's northern beacon, and proclaim
The eternal chorus of eternal Love.

I wonder as I gaze. That stream of light,
Undimmed, unquenched,—just as I see it now,—
Has issued from those dazzling points, through years
That go back far into eternity.
Exhaustless flood! for ever spent, renewed

For ever! Yea, and those refulgent drops,
Which now descend upon my lifted eye,
Left their far fountain twice three years ago.
While those winged particles, whose speed outstrips
The flight of thought, were on their way, the earth
Compassed its tedious circuit round and round,
And, in the extremes of annual change, beheld
Six autumns fade, six springs renew their bloom.
So far from earth those mighty orbs revolve!
So vast the void through which their beams descend!

Yea, glorious lamps of God! He may have quenched
Your ancient flames, and bid eternal night
Rest on your spheres; and yet no tidings reach
This distant planet. Messengers still come
Laden with your far fire, and we may seem
To see your lights still burning; while their blaze
But hides the black wreck of extinguished realms,
Where anarchy and darkness long have reigned.

Yet what is this, which to the astonished mind
Seems measureless, and which the baffled thought
Confounds? A span, a point, in those domains
Which the keen eye can traverse. Seven stars
Dwell in that brilliant cluster, and the sight
Embraces all at once; yet each from each
Recedes as far as each of them from earth.
And every star from every other burns
No less remote. From the profound of heaven,
Untravelled even in thought, keen, piercing rays
Dart through the void, revealing to the sense
Systems and worlds unnumbered. Take the glass,

And search the skies. The opening skies pour down
Upon your gaze thick showers of sparkling fire—
Stars, crowded, thronged, in regions so remote,
That their swift beams—the swiftest things that be—
Have travelled centuries on their flight to earth.
Earth, sun, and nearer constellations! what
Are ye, amid this infinite extent
And multitude of God's most infinite works!

And these are suns!—vast, central, living fires,
Lords of dependant systems, kings of worlds
That wait as satellites upon their power,
And flourish in their smile. Awake, my soul,
And meditate the wonder! Countless suns
Blaze round thee, leading forth their countless worlds!—
Worlds in whose bosoms living things rejoice,
And drink the bliss of being from the fount
Of all-pervading Love. What mind can know,
What tongue can utter, all their multitudes!
Thus numberless in numberless abodes!
Known but to thee, blessed Father! Thine they are,
Thy children, and thy care—and none o'erlooked
Of thee! No, not the humblest soul that dwells
Upon the humblest globe, which wheels its course
Amid the giant glories of the sky,
Like the mean mote that dances in the beam
Amongst the mirrored lamps, which fling
Their wasteful splendor from the palace wall,
None, none escape the kindness of thy care;
All compassed underneath thy spacious wing,
Each fed and guided by thy powerful hand.

Tell me, ye splendid orbs! as from your throne,

Ye mark the rolling provinces that own
Your sway—what beings fill those bright abodes?
How formed, how gifted? what their powers, their state,
Their happiness, their wisdom? Do they bear
The stamp of human nature? Or has God
Peopled those purer realms with lovelier forms
And more celestial minds? Does Innocence
Still wear her native and untainted bloom?
Or has Sin breathed his deadly blight abroad,
And sowed corruption in those fairy bowers?
Has War trod o'er them with his foot of fire?
And Slavery forged his chains; and Wrath, and Hate,
And sordid Selfishness, and cruel Lust,
Leagued their base bands to tread out light and truth,
And scatter woe where Heaven had planted joy?
Or are they yet all paradise, unfallen
And uncorrupt? existence one long joy
Without disease upon the frame, or sin
Upon the heart, or weariness of life—
Hope never quenched, and age unknown,
And death unfeared; while fresh and fadeless youth
Glows in the light from God's near throne of love?

Open your lips, ye wonderful and fair!
Speak, speak! the mysteries of those living worlds
Unfold!—No language? Everlasting light,
And everlasting silence?—Yet the eye
May read and understand. The hand of God
Has written legibly what man may know—
The Glory of the Maker. There it shines,
Ineffable, unchangeable: and man,
Bound to the surface of this pigmy globe,

May know and ask no more. In other days,
When death shall give the encumbered spirit wings,
Its range shall be extended; it shall roam,
Perchance, amongst those vast mysterious spheres,
Shall pass from orb to orb, and dwell in each,
Familiar with its children—learn their laws,
And share their state, and study and adore
The infinite varieties of bliss
And beauty, by the hand of Power divine
Lavished on all its works. Eternity
Shall thus roll on with ever fresh delight;
No pause of pleasure or improvement; world
On world still opening to the instructed mind
An unexhausted universe, and time
But adding to its glories; while the soul,
Advancing ever to the Source of light
And all perfection, lives, adores, and reigns
In cloudless knowledge, purity, and bliss.

MAY MORNING.

Beautifully broke forth the clear bright sun, and balmy was the breath of "incense-breathing morn," which welcomed the coming of the queen of the months. The blue sky seemed to smile, and the early birds were loud with their salutations. Nature, by a thousand cheerful sights and a thousand sweet sounds, testified her rejoicing, and the earth had decked her bosom with the first little flowers and budding greens for the steps of her lovely visiter.

But what was all this to one imprisoned within the dark chambers of the city—where the early hum of human traffic drowns the melody of nature's hymns, and high piles of brick shut from sight the azure heavens and the rainbow clouds? Man learns to sleep over the tokens of reviving spring, hardened to its holy serenity by the bustling avocations of ambition and gain. But childhood yet feels its native sympathy with the young year, and owns its influence, and loves to go forth with the glad birds and the infant flowers. It was the voice of children, cheerfully preparing for their May-morning stroll, which broke my slumbers. The sun, just risen, poured a tranquil light abroad, and I sprung from my couch, resolved once more to be a child, and taste the pleasures of spring-time in the field.

I had soon passed the streets and the bridge, and was fairly in the country. I breathed a fresher air, I trod

with a freer step. I was in the domains of Nature once more, escaped from the confinement of man's invention and the crowd of man's works. I saw nothing around me but the works of God, and the light and peace which he sheds upon the world that he loves—loves and blesses, in spite of its sins. I looked upward, and in letters of living light the heavens spread before me his love. I looked around, and I saw it in the swelling blossoms, in the budding branches, in the springing carpet of green. It came to my ear in the glad melody of the birds, and in the heartfelt accents of delight which burst from the groups of happy and active children. I felt it in every breath I drew, laden with the morning fragrance, which is sweeter than all perfume, and wafts health and pleasure on its wing. It all has but one Author, I exclaimed, and he is Love. It is his spirit which breathes in the gale, and lives in all these signs of joy and life.

> "Thy footsteps imprint the morning hills,
> Thy voice is heard in the music of rills,
> In the song of birds, and the heavenly chorus,
> That Nature utters, around us, o'er us.
> In every thing thy glory beameth;
> From every thing thy witness streameth."

And so it has been from the beginning—"He has never left himself without witness"—and what more delightful witness than these days, in which "he renews the face of the earth?" It seems like the freshness and purity of an original creation. I was ready to say with Buchanan, in his beautiful hymn. "On such a morning as this it was, that the new-created world sprung up at God's command." This is the air of holy tranquillity which was then upon all things; this the clear and fragrant breath that passed over the smiling gardens of

Eden; this the same sweet light that then shot down from the new-born sun, and diffused a gentle rapture over the face of nature and through the frame of living things. And such, too, shall be the aspect of that morning which ushers in the time of heaven's eternal year; such the serenity and glory of that day which shall call forth to renewed existence, not the plants and flowers from a temporary death, but the spirits of immortal men; and shall roll through earth and heaven, not the music of an earthly spring-time, but the rapturous anthems of the ransomed children of God, rising at the birth of the everlasting year.

Hail, then, all hail, thou fair morning of this fairest of the months—emblem of the fair morning that yet shall be! Memorial of the nativity of earth, image of God's ever present love, pledge of an everlasting year! Thou shalt pass away, beautiful as thou art, and thy blossoms and pleasures perish. The hot summer shall scorch them, and the stormy winter bury them beneath his snows. But that glorious spring-time which shall revive the being of man, shall never fade. The soul shall blossom and flourish for ever in the garden of God. His spirit breathes there a perpetual balm, and the sunshine of his countenance knows no variableness nor shadow of change. Roll on, ye tardy seasons! accomplish your appointed periods, and introduce that unfading May. Ye may change, but ye bring on that which cannot change. Ye may waft to me sorrows and disappointments as ye fly; but ye are fast bearing me where sorrow and disappointment cannot come. And I will welcome even the winter of Death, since it shall be followed by the spring of Heaven.

HYMN IN SICKNESS.

Father, thy gentle chastisement
  Falls kindly on my burdened soul;
I see its merciful intent,
  To warn me back to thy control;
And pray, that, while I kiss the rod,
I may find perfect peace with God.

The errors of my heart I know;
  I feel my deep infirmities;
For often virtuous feelings glow,
  And holy purposes arise,
But, like the morning clouds, decay,
As empty, though as fair as they.

Forgive the weakness I deplore;
  And let thy peace abound in me,
That I may trust my heart no more,
  But wholly cast myself on thee.
O let my Father's strength be mine,
And my devoted life be thine!

THE LIBATION.

HIGH-PRIEST.

'T is done. The praise is said. Another rite
Succeeds. Bring forth the sacred golden bowl;
And let the appointed priest convey it down
To Siloa's hallowed fountain. Let him draw
The sparkling waters; and with cautious step,
In glad procession, bring them up the mount,
And bear them to the altar of the Lord.
Attend him, ye that will; and, ye that will,
Abide, till with loud trump, and echoing shout,
And waving palms, the absent throng return.

WOMEN.

They go; they pass the gates; the sacred courts
They leave; their distant tread dies on the ear.
Wait not in silence for their slow return;
But wake the echoes of the Holy Place
With song, and warble forth the coming rite.

SONG (WOMAN).

Flow on, flow on, thou bright, clear stream!
Flow on, thou fair, perpetual fount!
Transparent as the sun's warm beam,
Bathe the stern foot of Judah's mount.

The sun above, thy waves below,
Unsullied shines, unsullied flow;
Thou as the crystal heavens art pure,
And like the heavens thou shalt endure.

The Temple crowns Moriah's height,
Thy waters murmur at its base;
That seems Jehovah's throne of light,
Thou his exhaustless fount of grace.
And when the emblems we would join
Of holy Love and Power divine,
We draw thy waters from their bed,
And pour them on the mountain's head
(Trumpet.)

PRIEST.

They come, they come! their signal notes resound;
Their steps approach; their gladdening songs draw near.

PEOPLE *(returning)*.

Hosanna! hosanna! we bring the libation,
The waters that flow from the fount of salvation.

HIGH-PRIEST.

Now let the sacred element be borne
To the high altar's top; there, with the wine
Already hallowed for the sacrifice,
Let it be mingled. With a reverent hand
Then pour the mixture out; while, flinging high
Their verdant palms, with solemn shout and song,
The people dance around their glorious shrine.

PEOPLE.

Hosanna! hosanna! pour out the libation!
Glory and beauty, O altar, to thee!
With gladness we draw from the wells of salvation
Waters of life, ever flowing and free.

Joy to thee, joy to thee, life-giving river!
Glory and beauty, O altar, to thee!
The streams of salvation roll onward for ever,—
Life to the universe, boundless and free.

HIGH-PRIEST.

Now tell your children what this rite intends;
What mean these glowing forms, these words of joy.

PRIEST.

The prophet gave the blow;
Forth gushed the cool, refreshing wave,
The parched and perishing to save,
Far as its waters flow.
Recalled to life, the dying band
Pressed eager to the destined land.

So, in some latter day,
When Israel lies in woe and fear,
Her great Anointed shall appear,
To chase her dark dismay.
From Him a holier stream shall flow,
To save the world from darker woe.

Oh, haste the glorious hour!
Haste, David's Son, illustrious King!
Come to thy waiting saints, and bring
Thy glory, peace, and power.
Hosanna! let the people cry;
Hosanna! earth and heaven reply.

EXTRACT FROM "MY DREAM OF LIFE."

* * * * There stood my bed;
There I lay waiting for a mother's kiss,
And soft good-night: then, breathless, sought to catch
Her last faint footstep as she slow retired;
Then drew the blanket o'er my face, and slept.
Time, in its lengthened flight, has wrought such change,
That hardly could I recognise those walls;
But that sweet evening kiss, I feel it now;
I hear that soft good-night, that parting step,
Still faintly fall upon my waiting ear.
The past comes thick around me—faded shapes,
But beautiful, of all that once have been,
And are no more. I sit beside the hearth,
And weep at scenes that once were only joy.
Oh, what is tender like a mother's love?
And what can pay its loss? To her I looked
To cheer and guide me in the fearful way
That leads through toil and peril into life;
And trusted then, when strength and wealth were mine,
To rock the cradle of her fading age,
As she had soothed the infancy of mine.

But heaven refused the boon. There is a grief
Severe with double anguish; when the heart
Sinks burdened with a present woe, and waits
For darker evils hastening in its train.

* * * * *

A sister's love! I dwell upon the theme—
The only love on earth to which the earth
Has given no taint of self-regardful care.
In even the mother's breast, a selfish fear
Throbs with the pulse of pure maternal joy,
And her own image mingles with the scene
Which hope makes radiant with her boy's renown.
But in a sister's breast affection lives,
All pure, unselfish, looking but to him.
Angel for angel glows with such regard,
Thus whole, deep, self-forgetting. Bowers of heaven
Witness it in the cherubs' changeless lives;
Each sees it in a sister's heart alone.
Devoted, passionless, unwearied—strong
To bear, exhaustless in its sympathy—
True in all change—unchilled by coldness. Scorn,
Neglect, and rudeness such as man's poor pride
Sometimes returns for all the gentle care
And sacrificing sisterly regard,—
These never move her. Patient to the last,
She watches through an unrewarded life,
And smoothes the pillow of ungrateful death.
But when the brother knows and owns her worth,
Tell me, what fellowship on earth like theirs?
See what a radiance glows upon their path!
Such as thy hand has drawn, illustrious bard,
In Jane de Montford—image unapproached

Of noble tenderness—or such as stood
In tears and woe at Korner's early tomb;
Or sat, through days of waywardness and love,
By Elia's side, to cheer a languid hope,
And soothe the unequal pilgrimage of pain.
And always thus—beneath a thousand roofs,
It toils, waits, watches, and imparts a hue
Of holiest heaven to low humanity.

* * * * *

To one upon the threshold of the world,
Whose opening way to life is thronged with forms
That lie in wait to threaten and seduce,
There is a worth untold in virtuous love.
'Tis as a talisman of power: unhurt
It bears him on, through snares of crafty vice,
And long array of pleasure's subtle host,
Baffling with potent charm their wily arts,
That lose their power to touch him. Thoughts impure,
Low aims, and selfish passions, shrink away.
It keeps him chaste—makes all his purposes
Companions of a virtuous hope—beats down
The painful empire of the present hour,
Pointing his thoughts to some sweet future home,
Henceforth his centred purpose, which imparts
Fresh vigour to his enterprise—to hand
And mind gives nerve, to pleasure turns all toil,
Makes honour doubly dear—all that is bad
In young ambition purifies, and lifts
High above selfishness the darling plan
Which forms his ruling passion. For he toils
No more alone, nor for himself.
The honour, peace, yea, life—and, more than all,

The good opinion of a purer mind—
A second, better conscience,—whose reproof
Stings deeper, whose approval gives more joy
Than his own breast—are all at stake in him;
And for her sake, in whom are hoarded up
The dearest treasures of his life on earth,
He keeps an uncontaminated heart,
And scorns the low seductiveness of sin.
Oh, holy power of pure, devoted love!
And Oh, thou holy sacred name!
Prime bliss of earth! Behind us and before
Our guiding star, our refuge! When we plunge,
Loose from the safeguard of a father's roof,
On life's uncertain flood, exposed and driven,
'Tis the mild memory of thy sacred days
That keeps the young man pure. A father's eye,
A mother's smile, a sister's gentle love,
The table, and the altar, and the hearth,
In reverend image, keep their early hold
Upon his heart, and crowd out guilt and shame.
Then, too, the hope that in some after day
These consecrated ties shall be renewed
In him, the founder of another house;
And wife and children—earth's so precious names—
Be gathered round the hearth, where he himself
Shall be the father—oh, this glowing hope
With memory co-working, lightens toil,
And renders impotent the plots of earth
To warp him from his innocence and faith.

* * * * *

For I have faith that in that distant day—
That bright, enduring day, for which man's soul

Is destined—I shall roam from light to light,
Through all your orbs, and tread your spotless courts,
Read the long records of your ancient day,
And share your toils and pleasures. Glorious hope!
To spring from this dim planet, wafted on
To brightness after brightness—visitant
And witness of the infinite abodes
Of perfect truth and love—to trace with joy
In all the ONE Almighty, and to join
The harmonious choirs of heaven, whose glorious song
Rings through the eternal arches evermore—
To sit in converse blessed, not with saints
Alone on earth illustrious, but with those
The sage and holy of remoter spheres—
The ransomed from all planets—sons of grace
And purity from all the stars—whose eyes
Have never looked, perchance, on sin; whose ears
Have heard, whose hearts conceived no crime;
Whose stainless hands have wrought no task but love's;
Whose voice has uttered only wisdom;—bards
Inspired from founts of highest heaven;
Philosophers, to whom earth's science lies,
When lofticst, infinitely low; whose mind,
Not creeping step by step, like man's, but quick
And piercing, like the light, flashes on truth
And knowledge; and whose love of excellence,
Unsullied by the low desires and tastes
Of earth, is ever active, vigilant, and free.

THE END.

Alex. Mayne, Printer, High Street, Belfast.

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